Shojo Beat Manga

Kamikaze Girls™

Story by

Novala Ta

Art by

Yukio Ka

9781421502687 22
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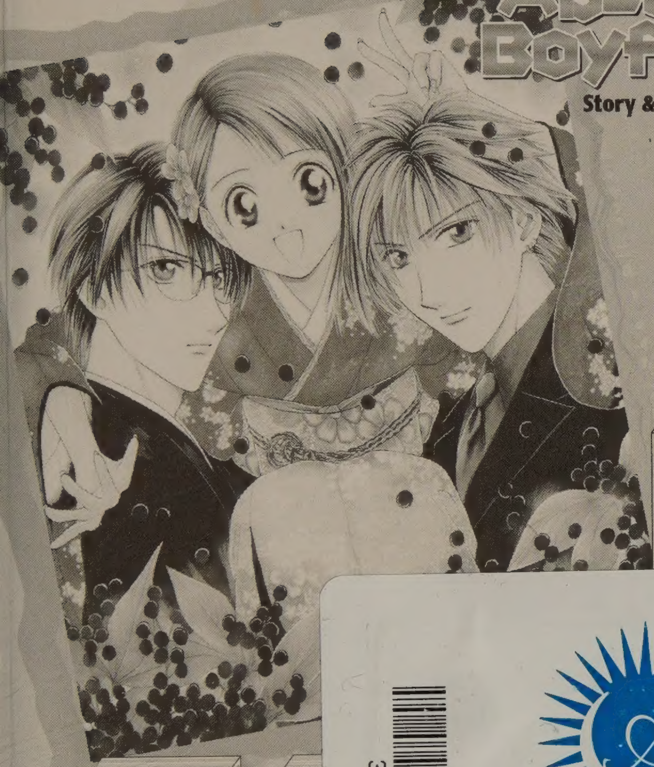

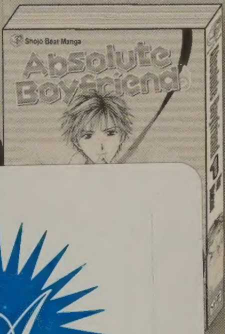
Shojo Beat Manga
Absolute Boyfriend

Baby & Me
Marimo Ragawa
1

Novala
Yukio

Absolute Boyfriend™

Story & Art by Yuu Watase

He's sweet.
He's drop-dead gorgeous.

And if you know his secret, he'll only have eyes for you!

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Shojo Beat
MANGA from the HEART

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www.shojobeat.com

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RATED T TEEN
RATED T+ FOR OLDER TEEN
Shojo Beat
VIZ media

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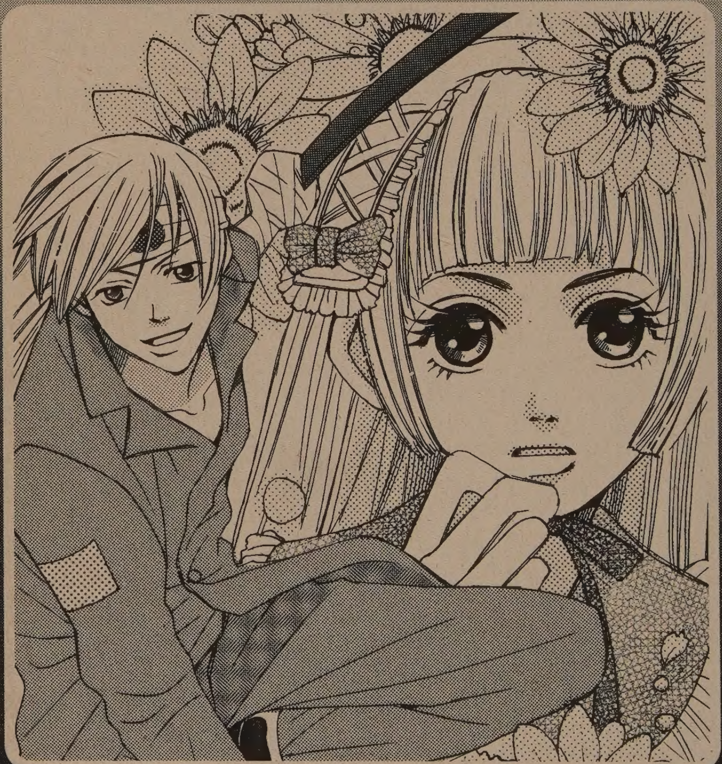
Shojo Beat

Kamikaze Girls™



Story by
Novala Takemoto

Art by
Yukio Kanesada

Kamikaze Girls™

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY NOVALA TAKEMOTO
ART BY YUKIO KANESADA

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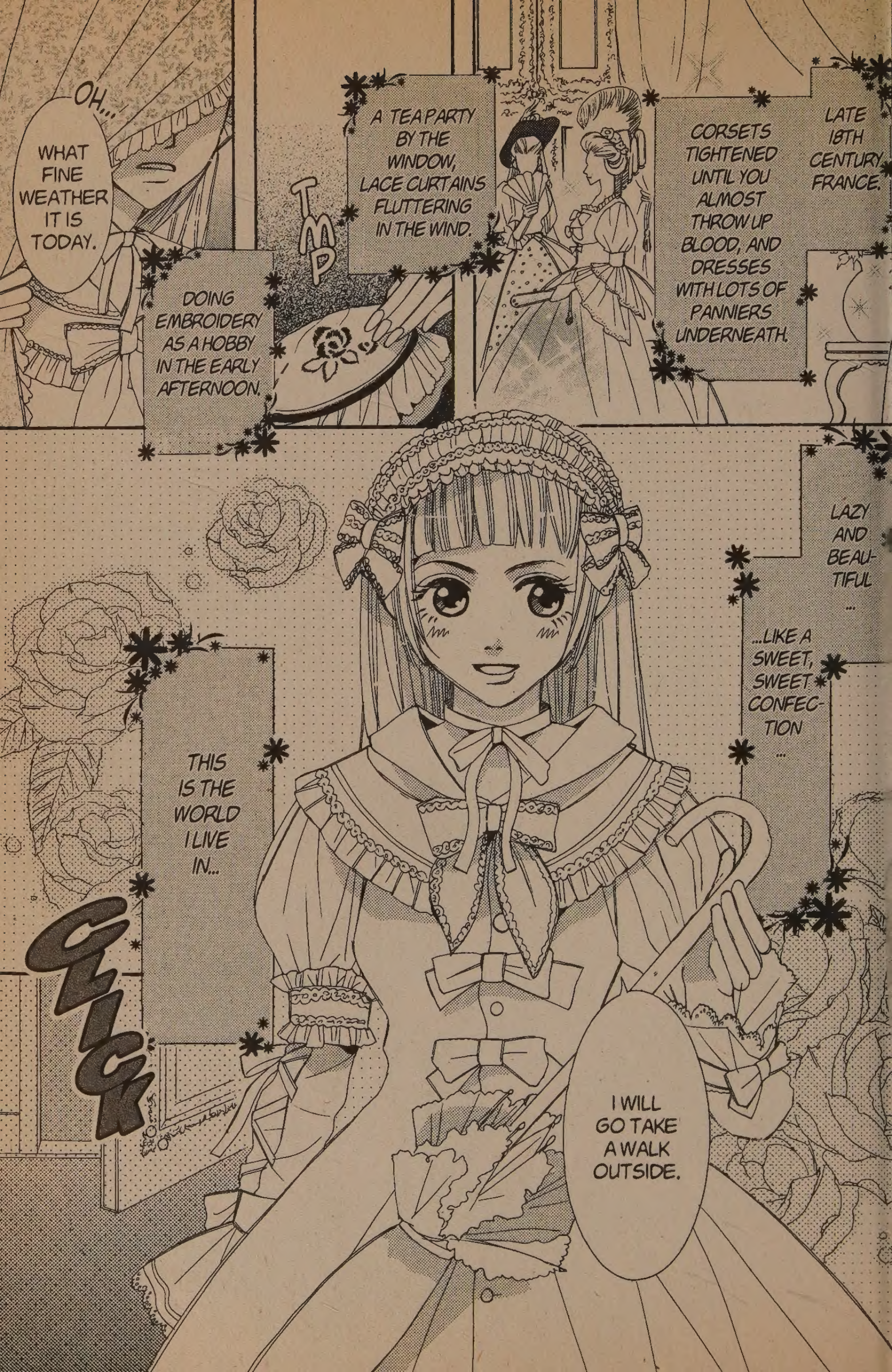
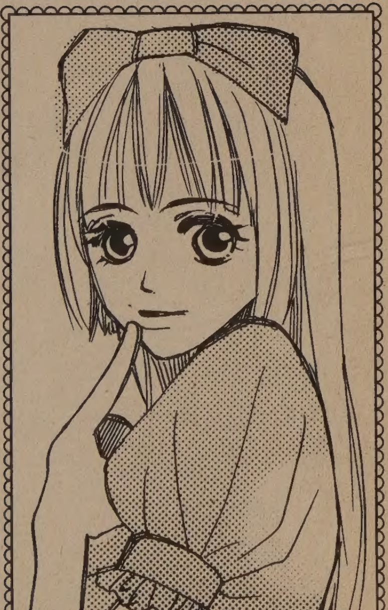
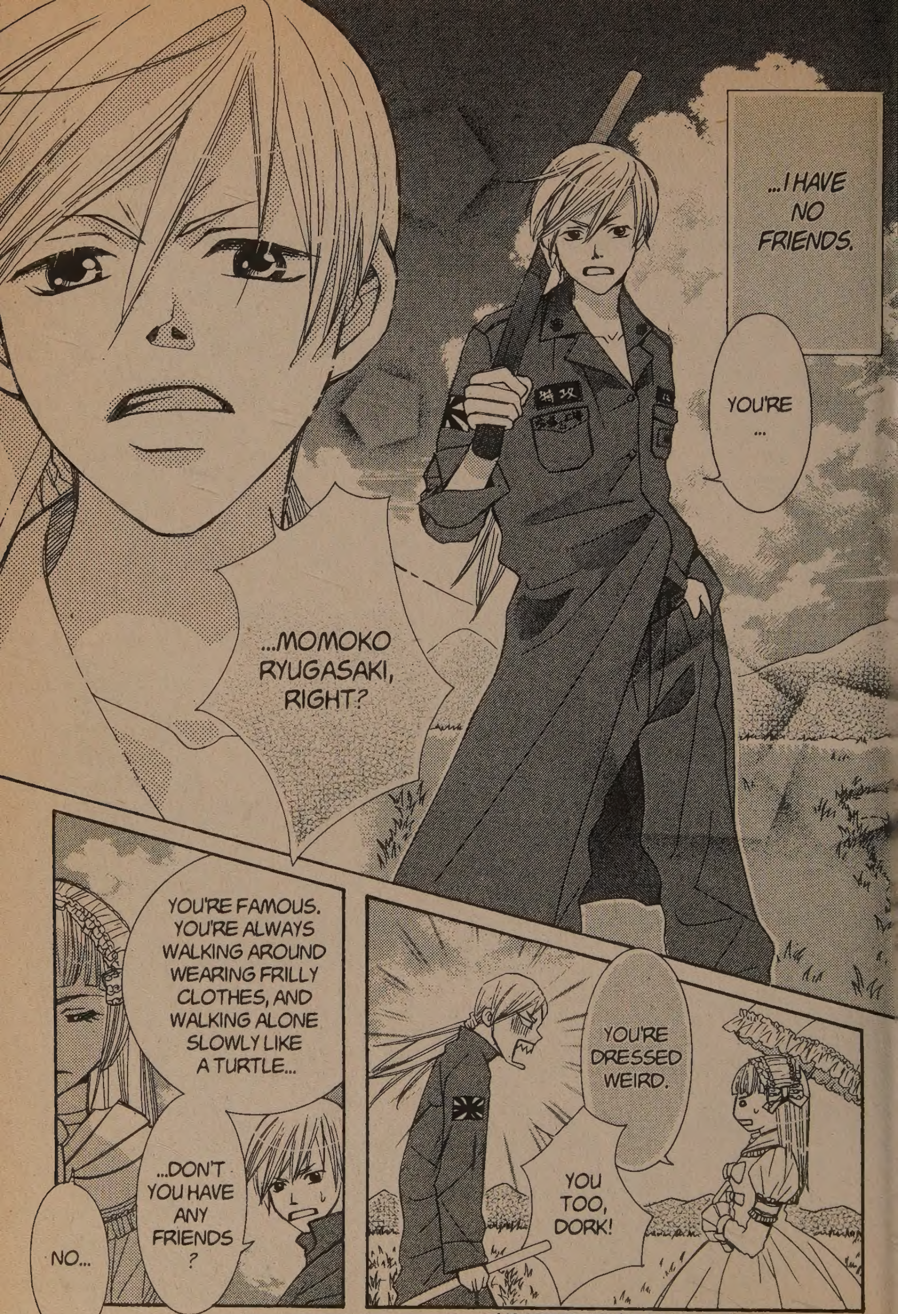
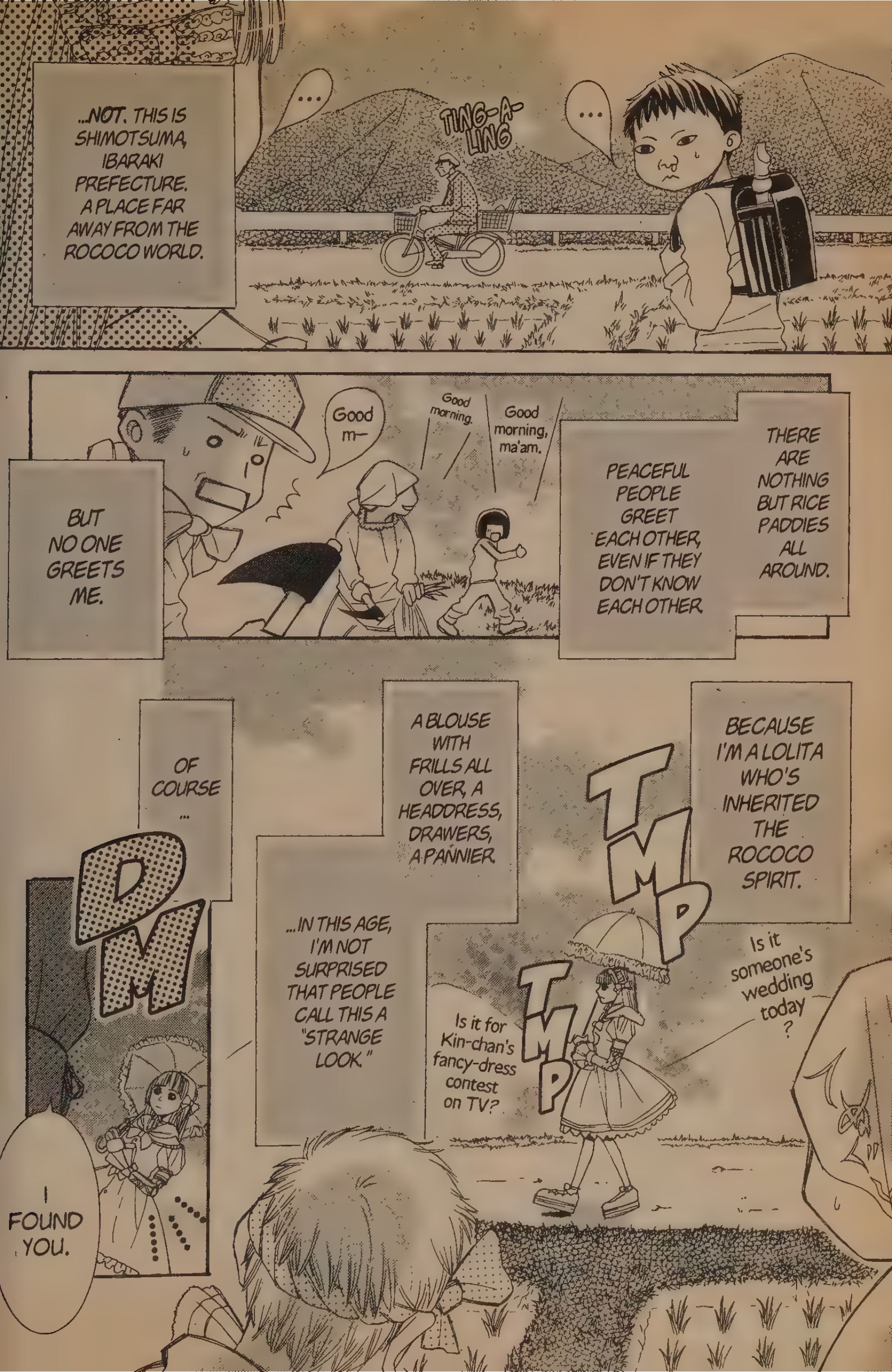
Story & Art by Yukio Kanesada

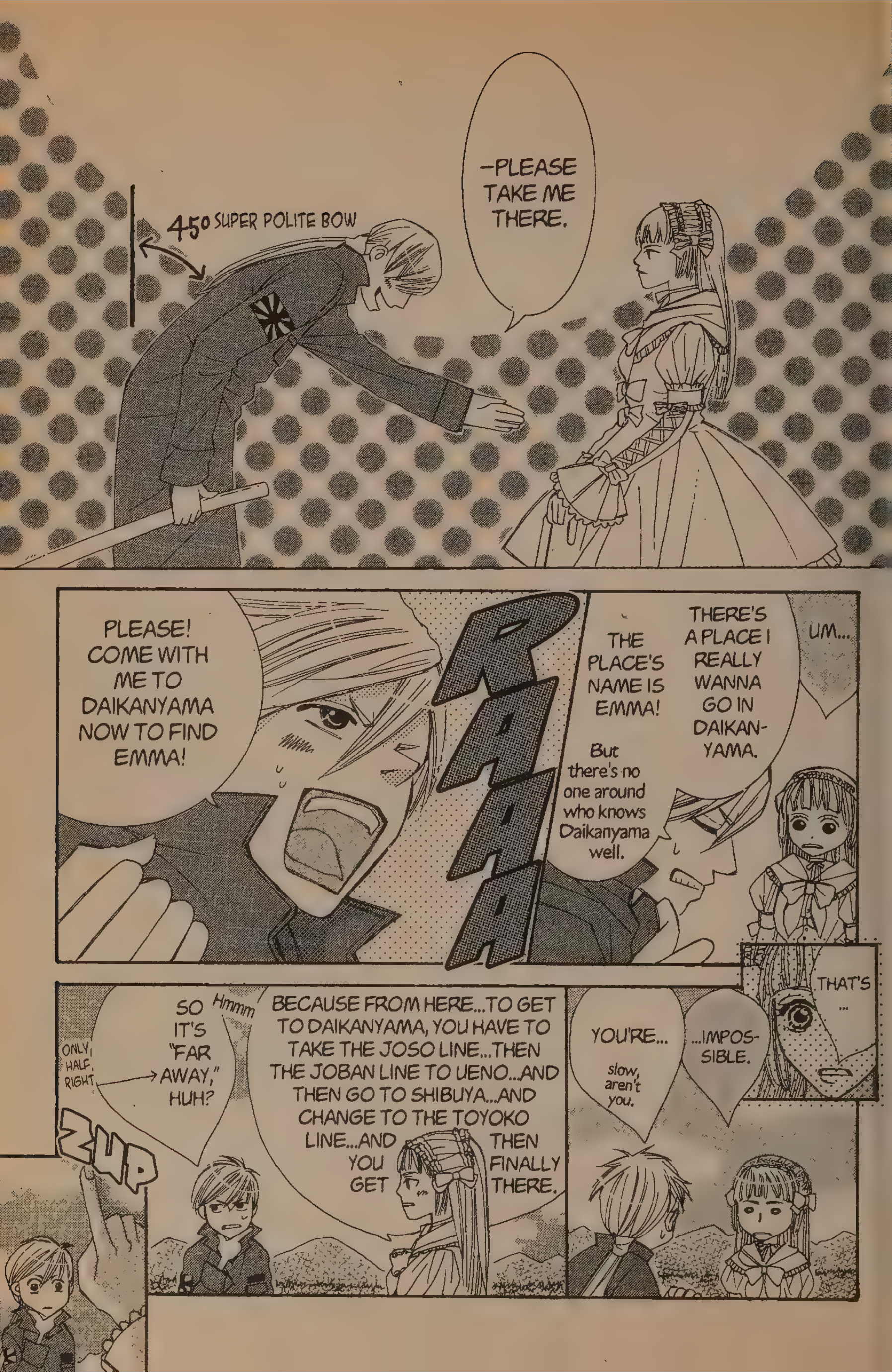

LATE 18TH CENTURY FRANCE.
CORSETS TIGHTENED UNTIL YOU ALMOST THROW UP BLOOD, AND DRESSES WITH LOTS OF PANNIERS UNDERNEATH.
A TEA PARTY BY THE WINDOW, LACE CURTAINS FLUTTERING IN THE WIND.
TMP
DOING EMBROIDERY AS A HOBBY IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON.
OH...
WHAT FINE WEATHER IT IS TODAY.
LAZY AND BEAUTIFUL...
...LIKE A SWEET, SWEET CONFECTION...
THIS IS THE WORLD I LIVE IN...
CLICK
I WILL GO TAKE A WALK OUTSIDE.

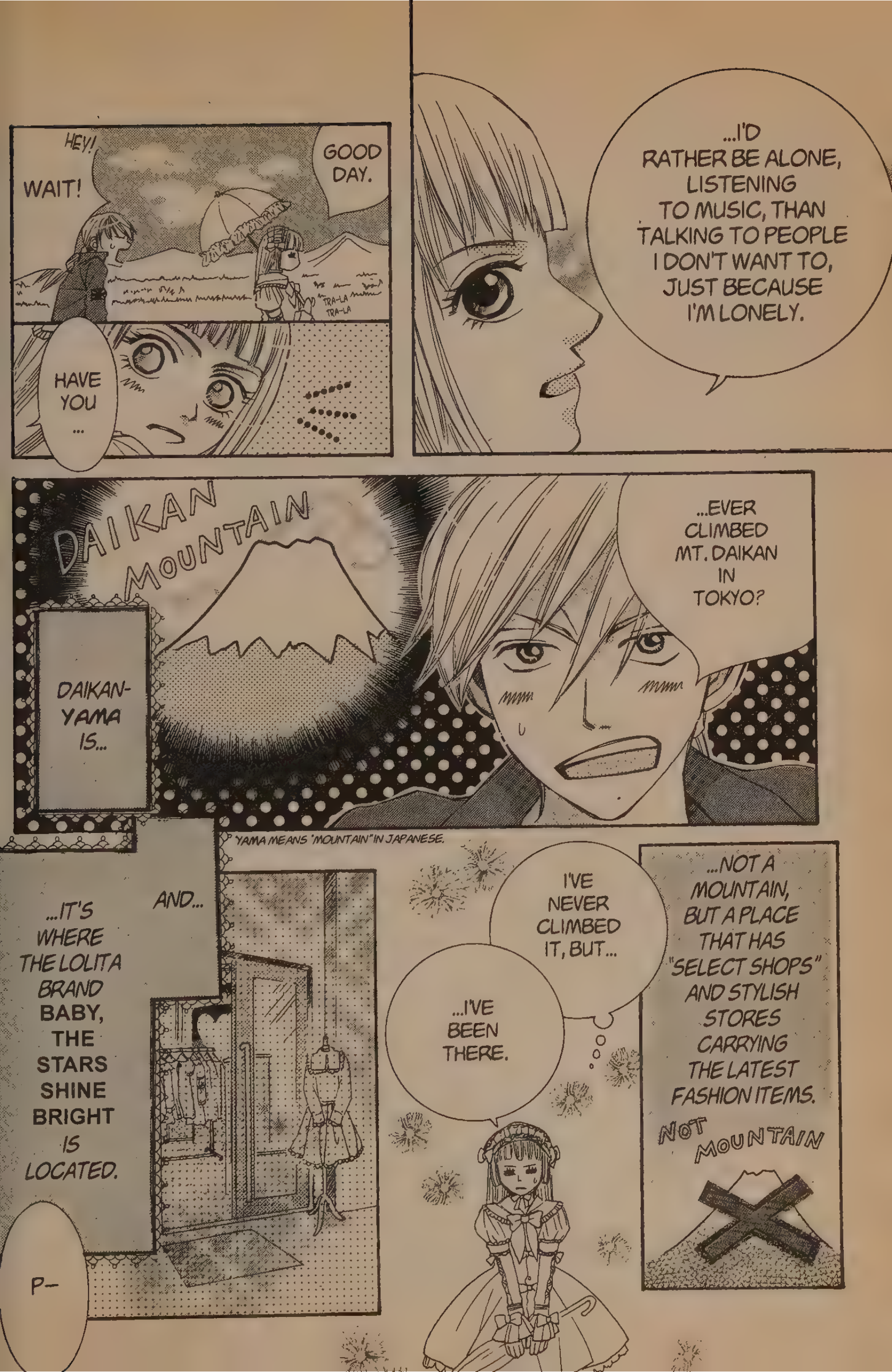



...I HAVE NO FRIENDS.
YOU'RE ...
...MOMOKO RYUGASAKI, RIGHT?
YOU'RE DRESSED WEIRD.
YOU TOO, DORK!
YOU'RE FAMOUS. YOU'RE ALWAYS WALKING AROUND WEARING FRILLY CLOTHES, AND WALKING ALONE SLOWLY LIKE A TURTLE...
...DON'T YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS?
NO...

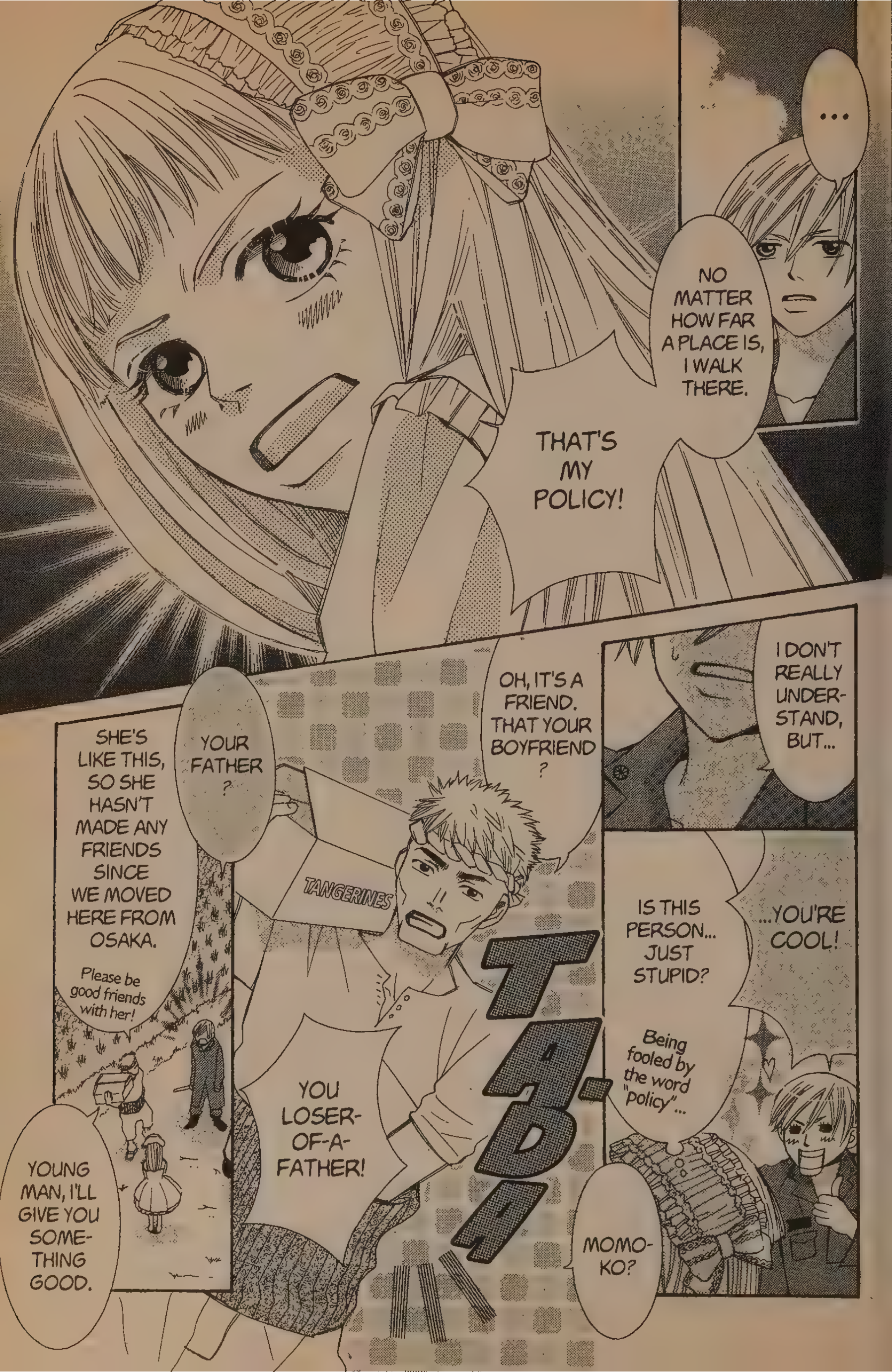
SHE AGREED WITHOUT REALIZING IT.

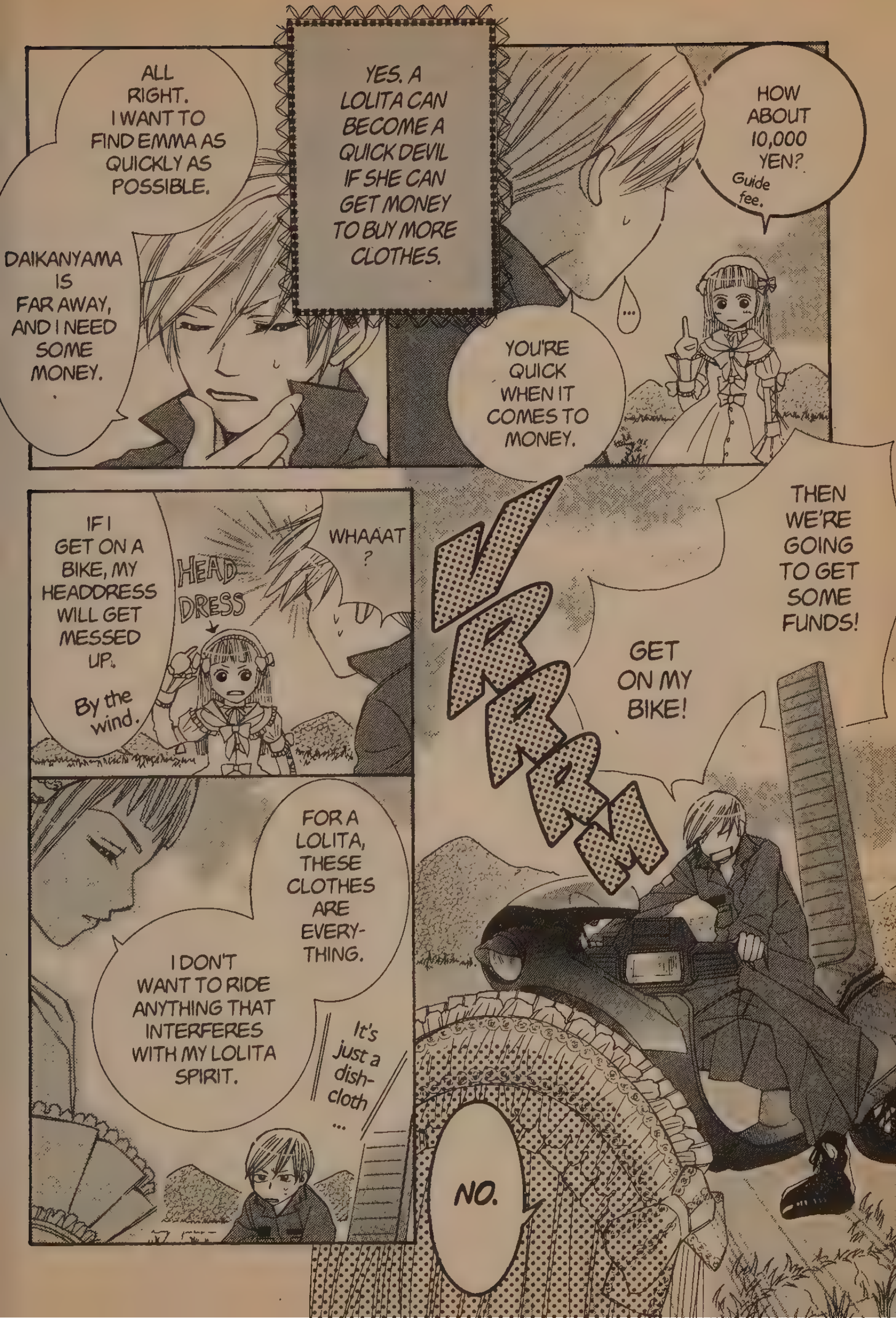

...NOT. THIS IS SHIMOTSUMA, IBARAKI PREFECTURE. A PLACE FAR AWAY FROM THE ROCOCO WORLD.
...
TING-A-LING
...
THERE ARE NOTHING BUT RICE PADDIES ALL AROUND.
PEACEFUL PEOPLE GREET EACH OTHER, EVEN IF THEY DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER.
Good morning, ma'am.
Good morning.
Good m—
BUT NO ONE GREETS ME.
BECAUSE I'M A LOLITA WHO'S INHERITED THE ROCOCO SPIRIT.
A BLOUSE WITH FRILLS ALL OVER, A HEADDRESS, DRAWERS, A PANNIER.
OF COURSE...
...IN THIS AGE, I'M NOT SURPRISED THAT PEOPLE CALL THIS A "STRANGE LOOK."
TMP
TMP
Is it someone's wedding today?
Is it for Kin-chan's fancy-dress contest on TV?
DM
I FOUND YOU.

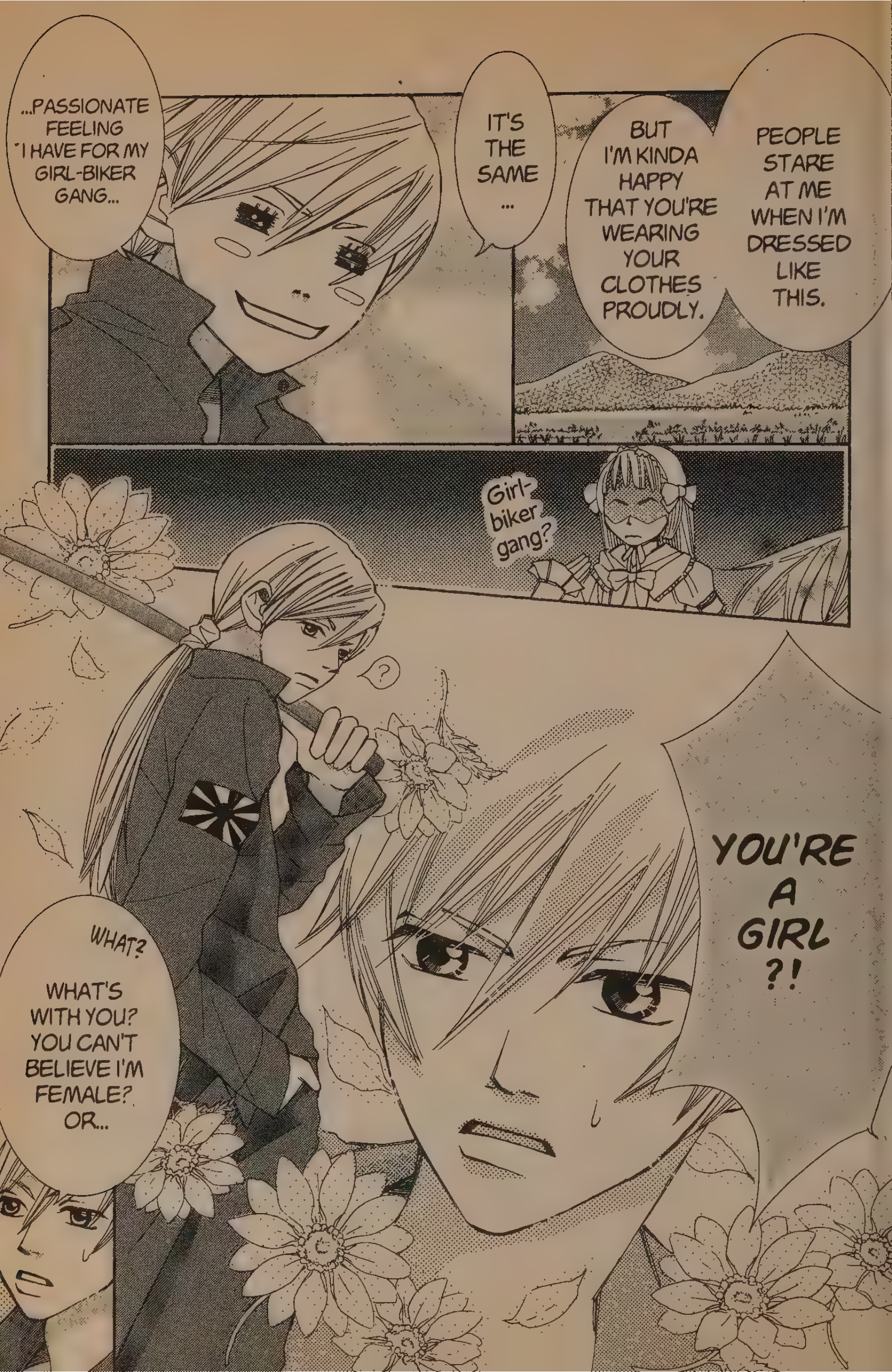

—PLEASE TAKE ME THERE.
45° SUPER POLITE BOW
UM...
THERE'S A PLACE I REALLY WANNA GO IN DAIKANYAMA.
THE PLACE'S NAME IS EMMA!
But there's no one around who knows Daikanyama well.
RAAAA
PLEASE! COME WITH ME TO DAIKANYAMA NOW TO FIND EMMA!
THAT'S...
...IMPOSSIBLE.
YOU'RE...
slow, aren't you.
BECAUSE FROM HERE...TO GET TO DAIKANYAMA, YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE JOSO LINE...THEN THE JOBAN LINE TO UENO...AND THEN GO TO SHIBUYA...AND CHANGE TO THE TOYOKO LINE...AND THEN FINALLY YOU GET THERE.
Hmmm
SO IT'S "FAR AWAY," HUH?
ONLY HALF RIGHT
ZUP

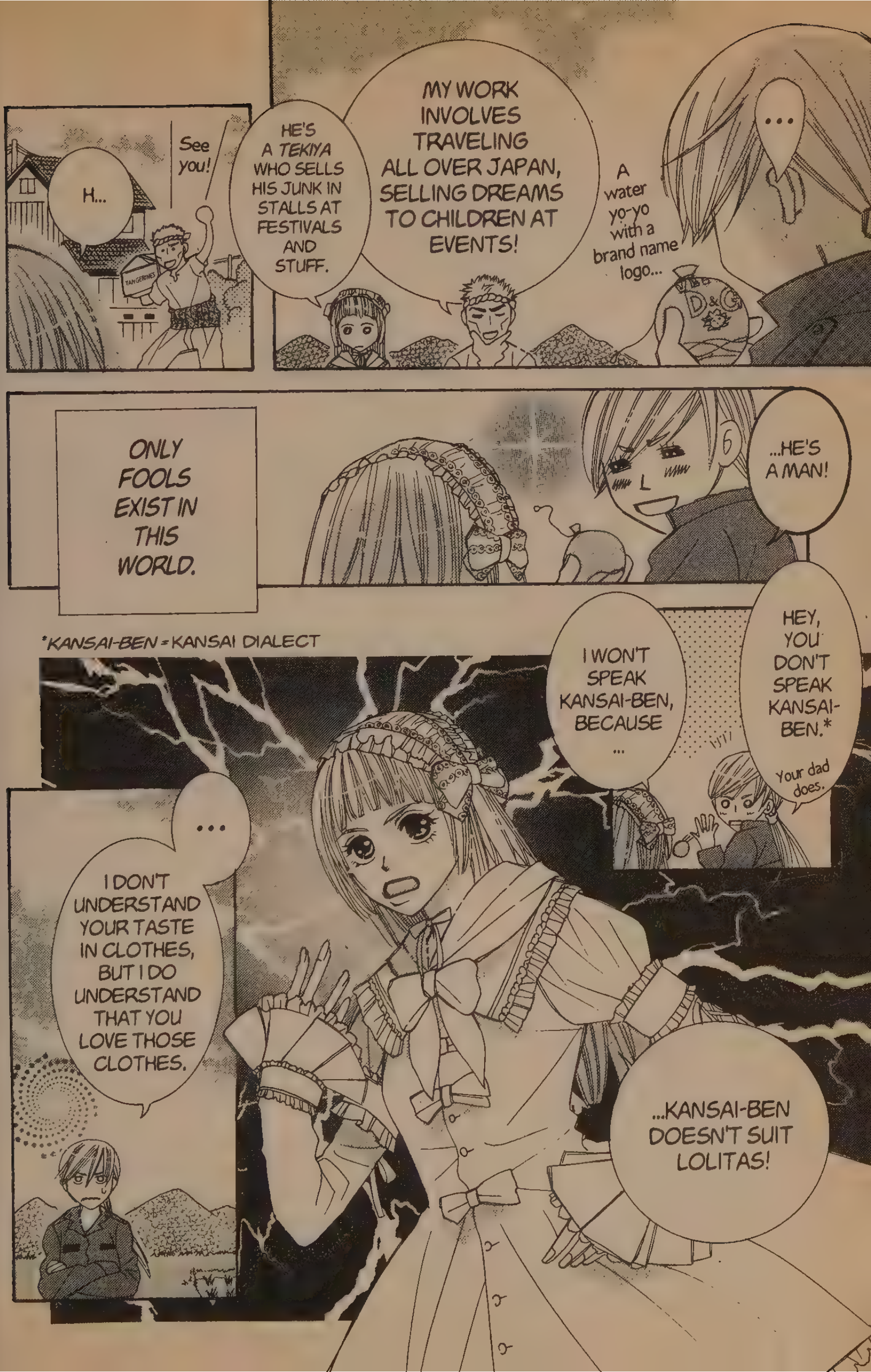

...I'D RATHER BE ALONE, LISTENING TO MUSIC, THAN TALKING TO PEOPLE I DON'T WANT TO, JUST BECAUSE I'M LONELY.
GOOD DAY.
HEY!
WAIT!
TRA-LA TRA-LA
HAVE YOU ...
...EVER CLIMBED MT. DAIKAN IN TOKYO?
DAIKAN MOUNTAIN
DAIKAN-YAMA IS...
...NOT A MOUNTAIN, BUT A PLACE THAT HAS "SELECT SHOPS" AND STYLISH STORES CARRYING THE LATEST FASHION ITEMS.
NOT MOUNTAIN
I'VE NEVER CLIMBED IT, BUT...
...I'VE BEEN THERE.
AND...
...IT'S WHERE THE LOLITA BRAND BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT IS LOCATED.
P–

YAMA MEANS "MOUNTAIN" IN JAPANESE.

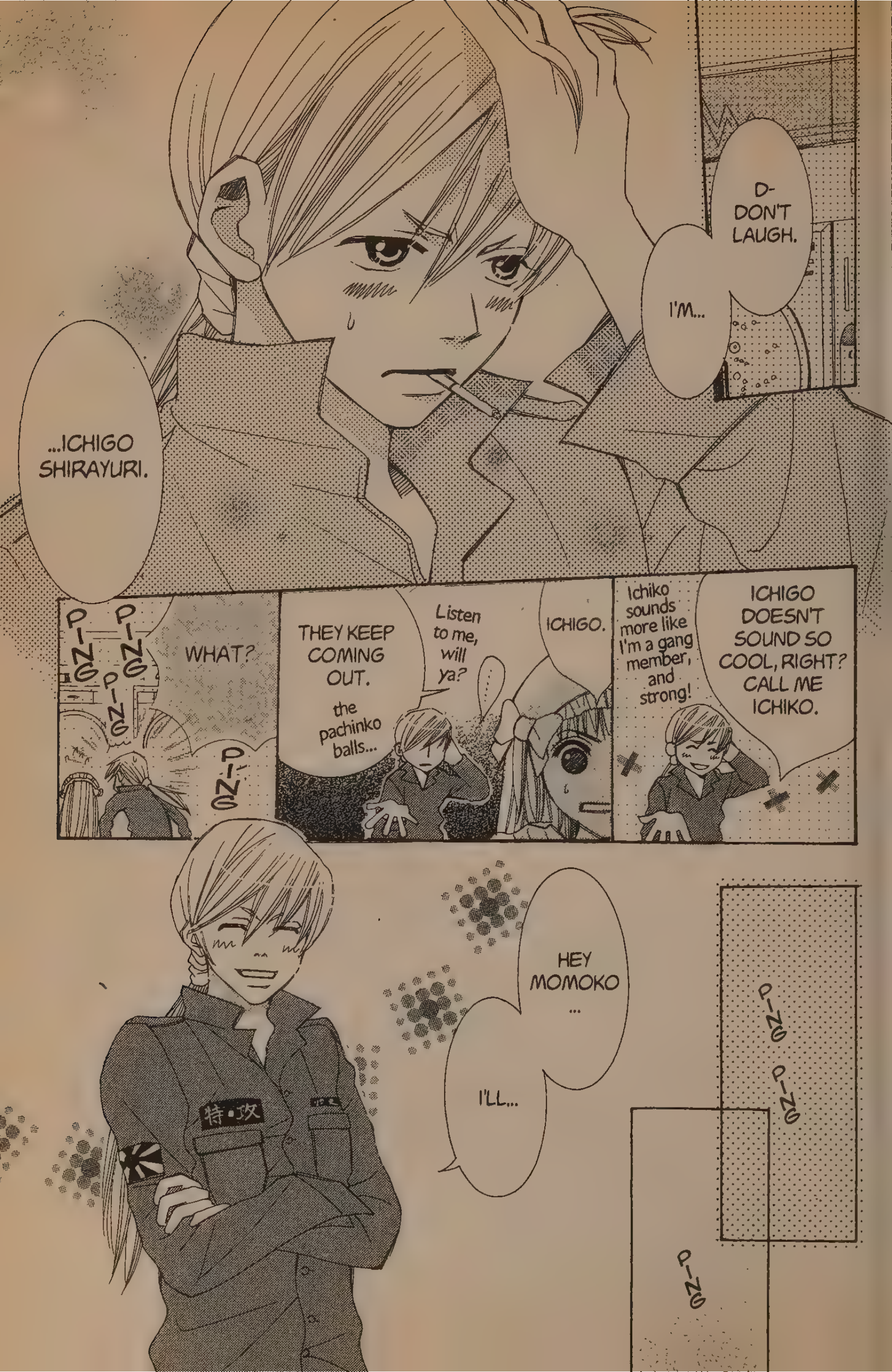

...
NO MATTER HOW FAR A PLACE IS, I WALK THERE.
THAT'S MY POLICY!
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND, BUT...
...YOU'RE COOL!
IS THIS PERSON... JUST STUPID?
Being fooled by the word "policy"...
MOMO-KO?
OH, IT'S A FRIEND. THAT YOUR BOYFRIEND?
YOUR FATHER?
TANGERINES
TA-DA
YOU LOSER-OF-A-FATHER!
SHE'S LIKE THIS, SO SHE HASN'T MADE ANY FRIENDS SINCE WE MOVED HERE FROM OSAKA.
Please be good friends with her!
YOUNG MAN, I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING GOOD.

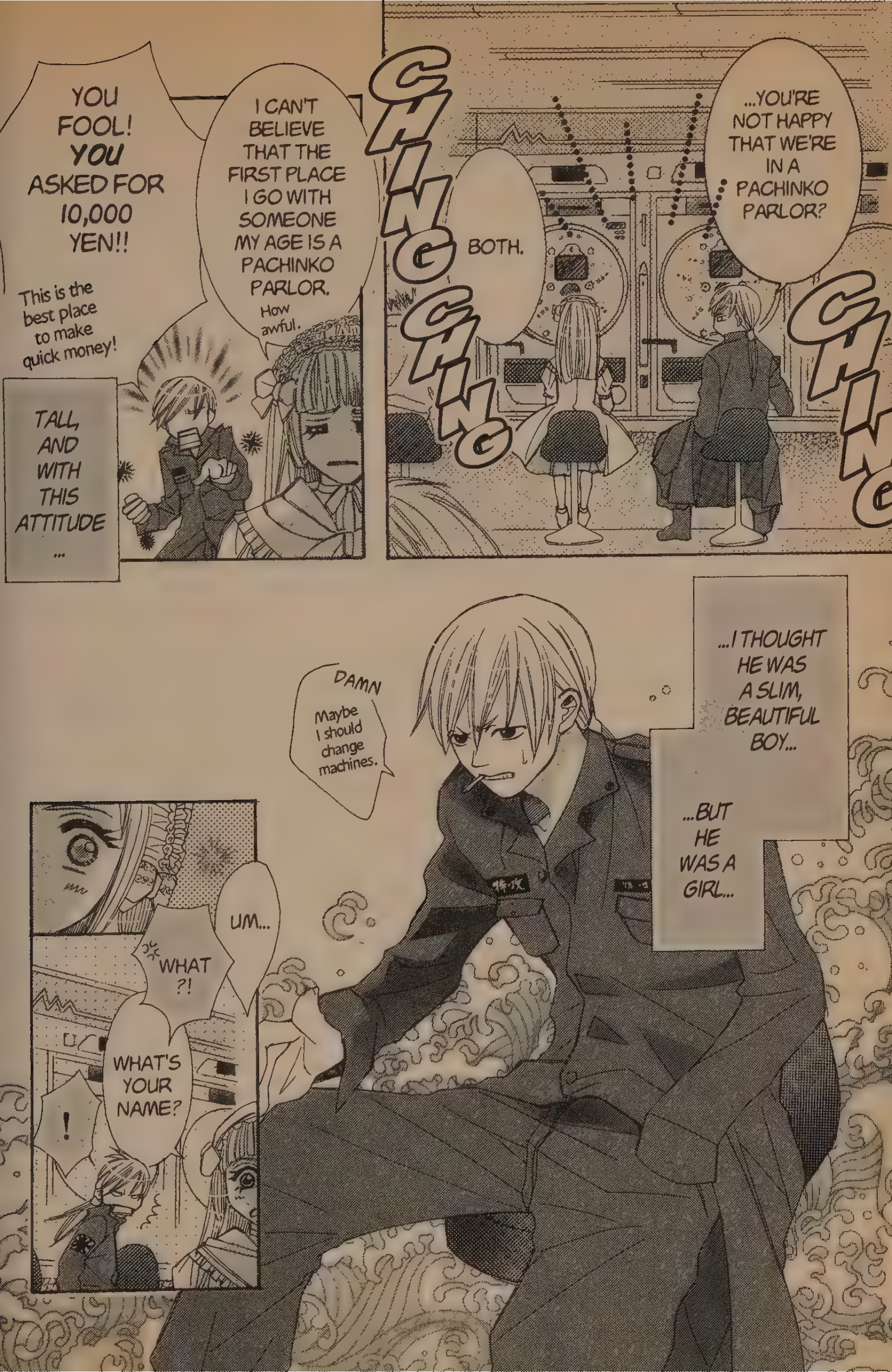

HOW ABOUT 10,000 YEN? Guide fee.
...
YOU'RE QUICK WHEN IT COMES TO MONEY.
YES. A LOLITA CAN BECOME A QUICK DEVIL IF SHE CAN GET MONEY TO BUY MORE CLOTHES.
ALL RIGHT. I WANT TO FIND EMMA AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
DAIKANYAMA IS FAR AWAY, AND I NEED SOME MONEY.
THEN WE'RE GOING TO GET SOME FUNDS!
GET ON MY BIKE!
VRRRM
NO.
WHAAAT?
IF I GET ON A BIKE, MY HEADDRESS WILL GET MESSED UP. By the wind.
HEAD DRESS
FOR A LOLITA, THESE CLOTHES ARE EVERYTHING.
I DON'T WANT TO RIDE ANYTHING THAT INTERFERES WITH MY LOLITA SPIRIT.
It's just a dishcloth...

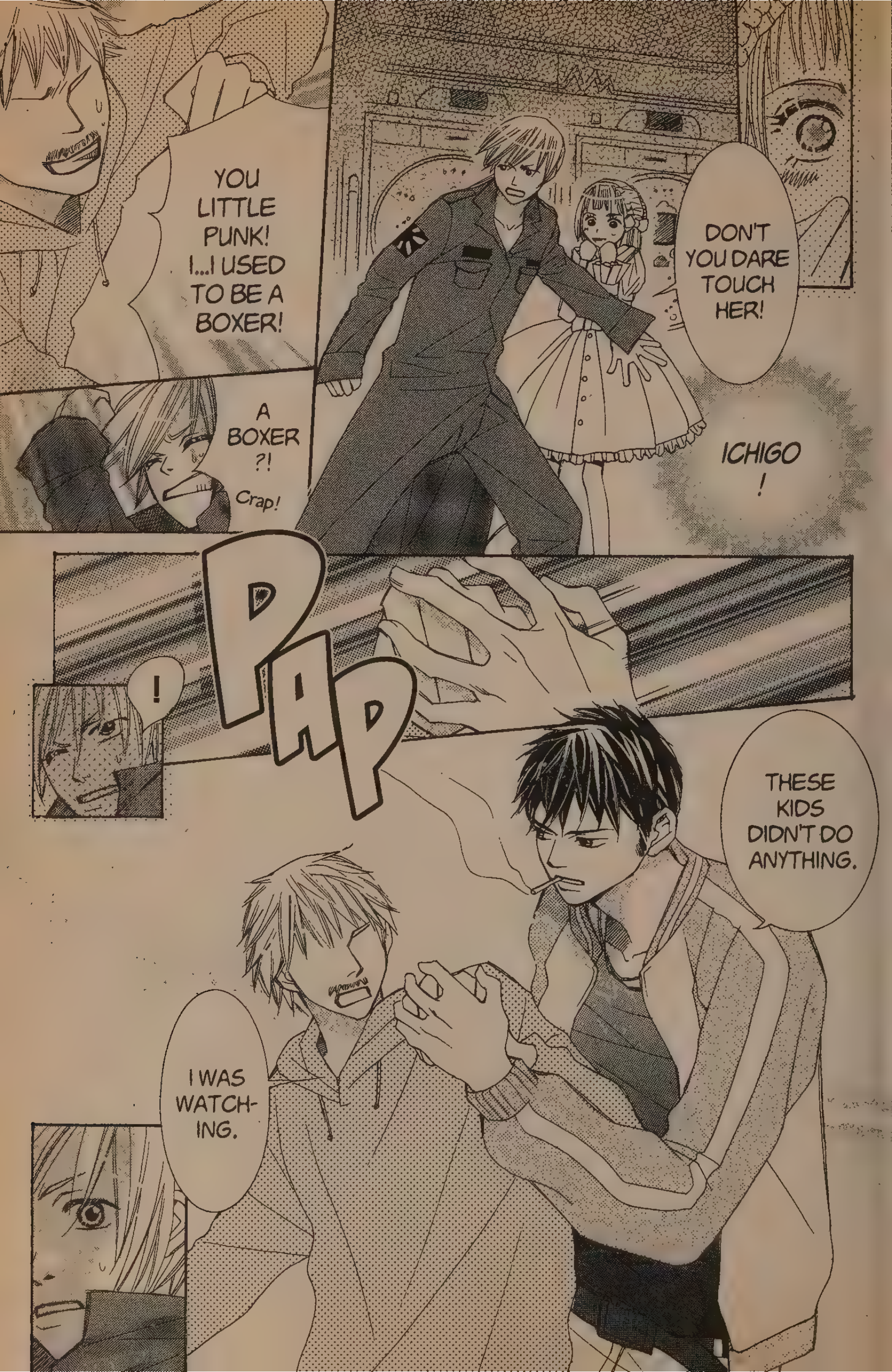

PEOPLE STARE AT ME WHEN I'M DRESSED LIKE THIS.
BUT I'M KINDA HAPPY THAT YOU'RE WEARING YOUR CLOTHES PROUDLY.
IT'S THE SAME ...
...PASSIONATE FEELING I HAVE FOR MY GIRL-BIKER GANG...
Girl-biker gang?
?
YOU'RE A GIRL ?!
WHAT? WHAT'S WITH YOU? YOU CAN'T BELIEVE I'M FEMALE? OR...

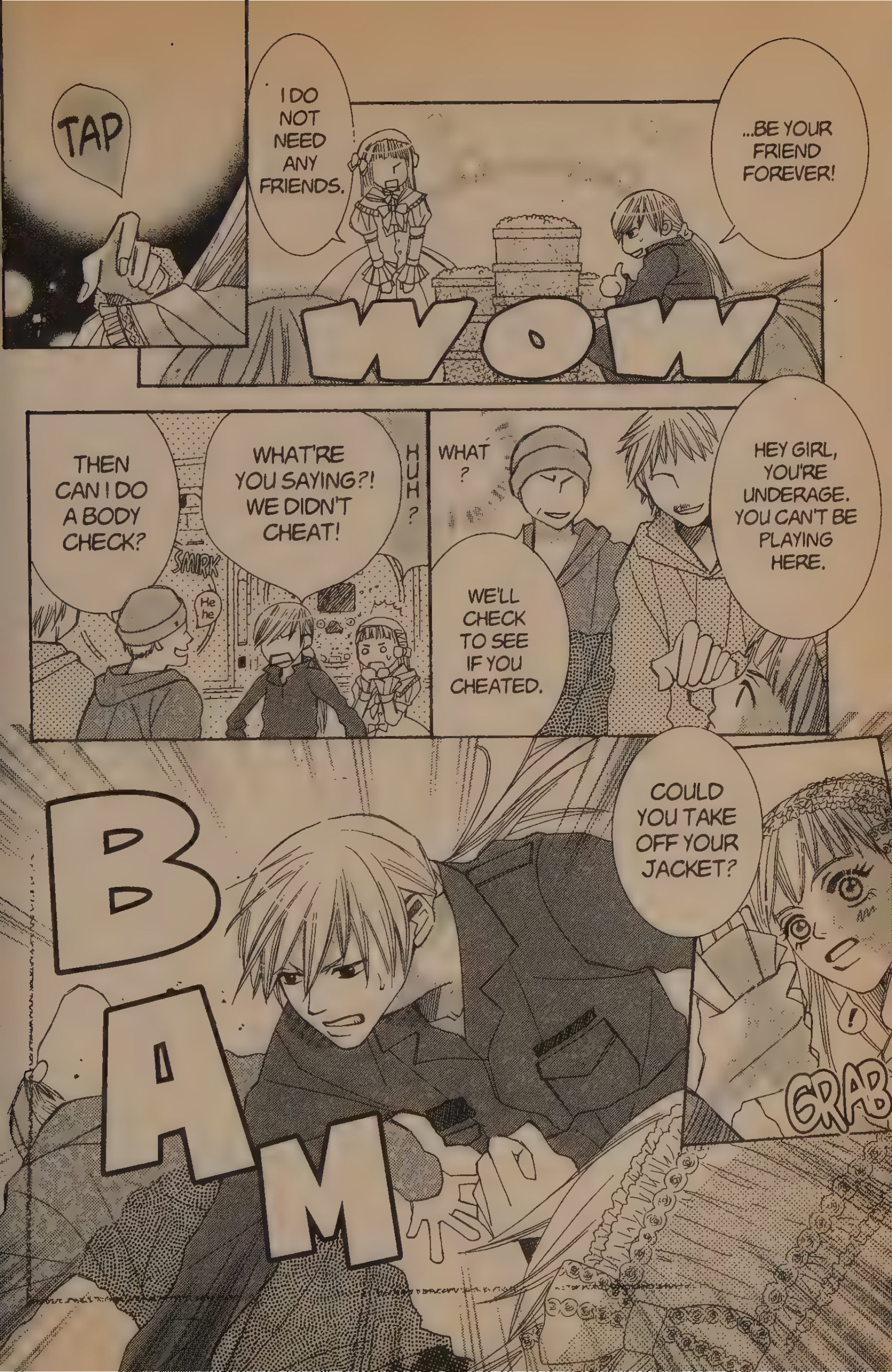

...
A water yo-yo with a brand name logo...
D&G
MY WORK INVOLVES TRAVELING ALL OVER JAPAN, SELLING DREAMS TO CHILDREN AT EVENTS!
HE'S A *TEKIYA* WHO SELLS HIS JUNK IN STALLS AT FESTIVALS AND STUFF.
See you!
TANGERINES
H...
...HE'S A MAN!
ONLY FOOLS EXIST IN THIS WORLD.
HEY, YOU DON'T SPEAK KANSAI-BEN.*
Your dad does.
I WON'T SPEAK KANSAI-BEN, BECAUSE ...
...KANSAI-BEN DOESN'T SUIT LOLITAS!
...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR TASTE IN CLOTHES, BUT I DO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU LOVE THOSE CLOTHES.

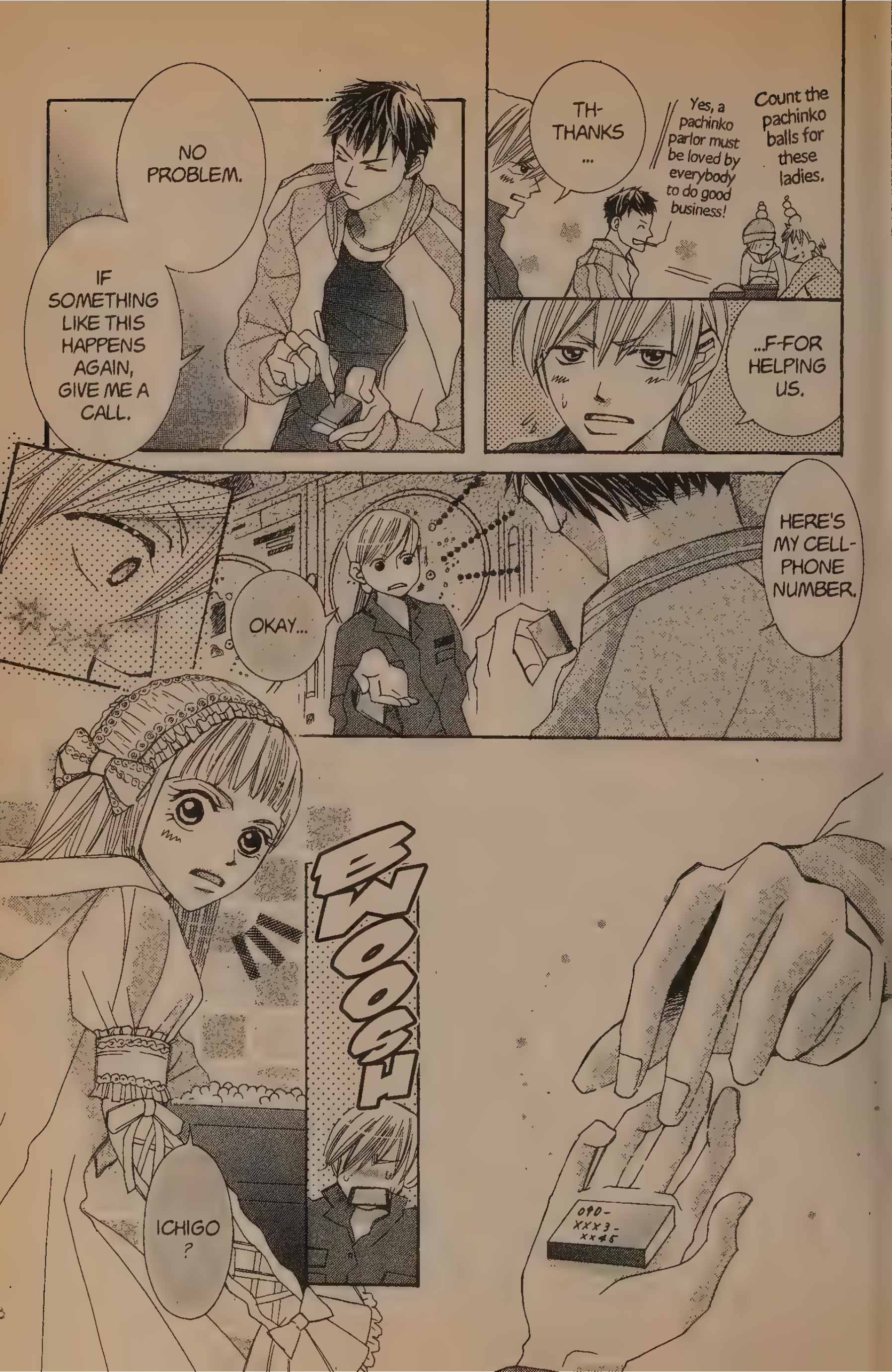
*KANSAI-BEN = KANSAI DIALECT

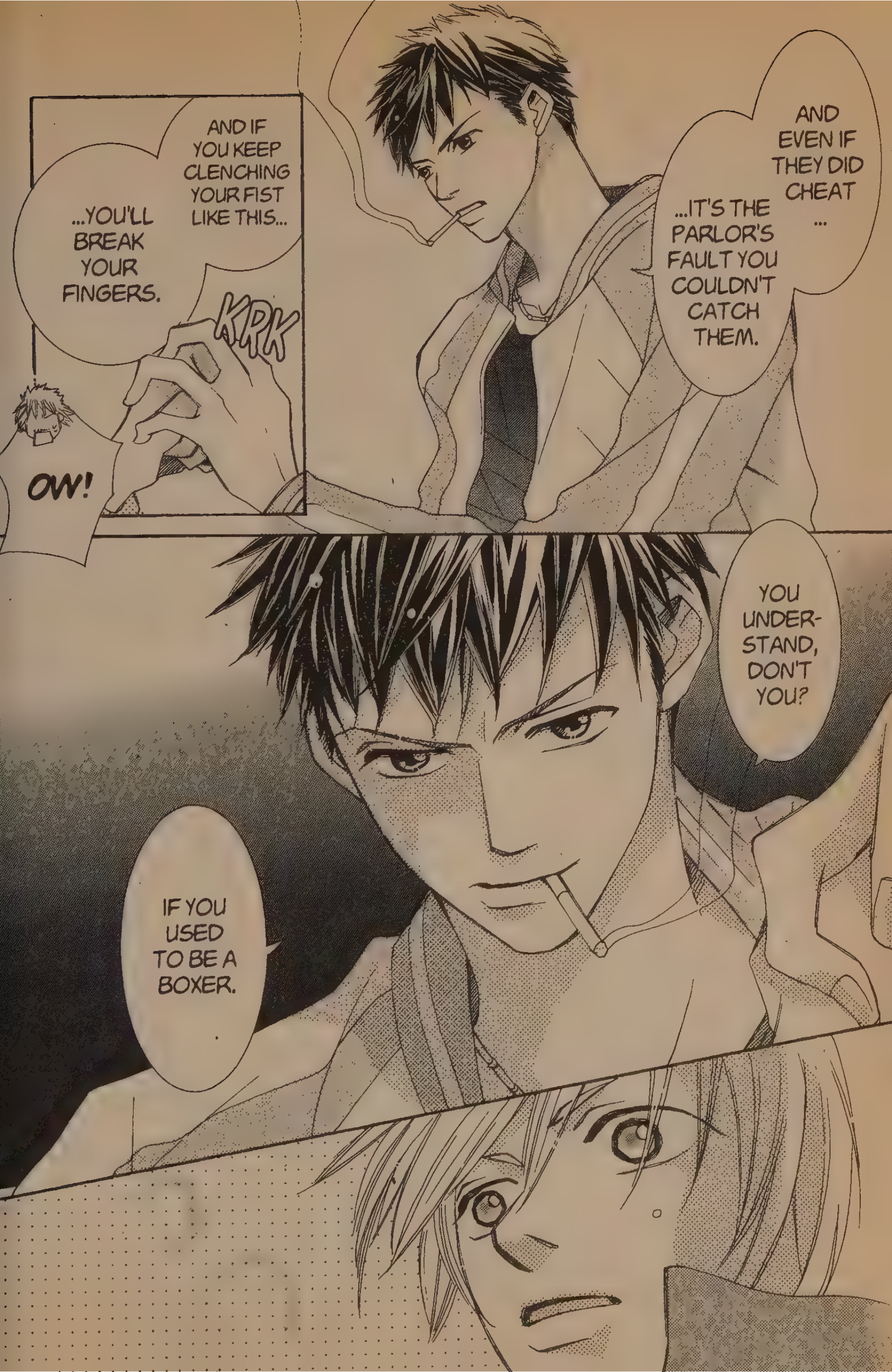

D-DON'T LAUGH.
I'M...
...ICHIGO SHIRAYURI.
ICHIGO DOESN'T SOUND SO COOL, RIGHT? CALL ME ICHIKO.
Ichiko sounds more like I'm a gang member, and strong!
ICHIGO.
Listen to me, will ya?
THEY KEEP COMING OUT.
the pachinko balls...
WHAT?
PING PING PING
PING
特・攻
HEY MOMOKO ...
I'LL...
PING PING
PING

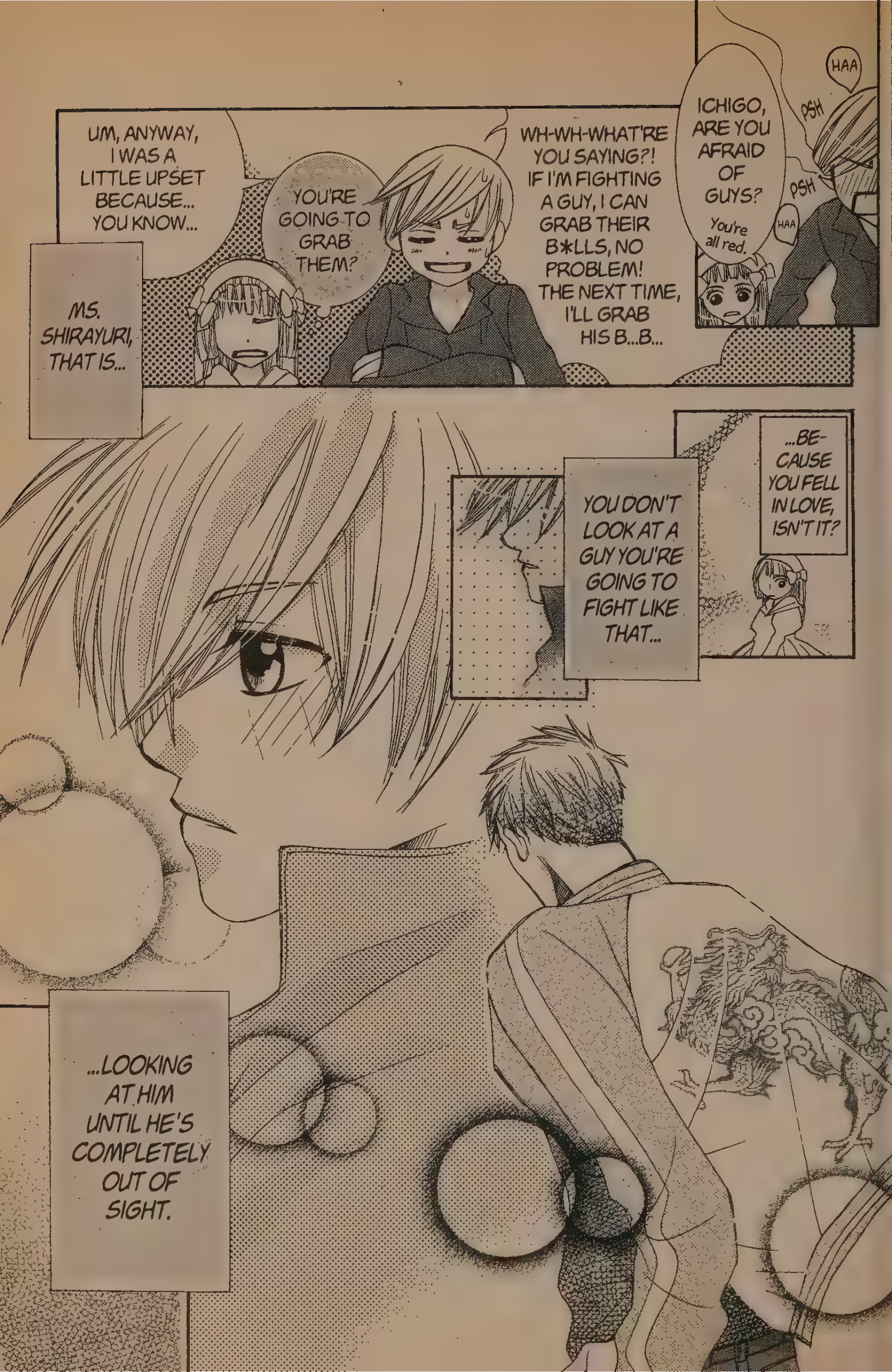

...YOU'RE NOT HAPPY THAT WE'RE IN A PACHINKO PARLOR?
CHING
BOTH.
CHING CHING
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST PLACE I GO WITH SOMEONE MY AGE IS A PACHINKO PARLOR.
How awful.
YOU FOOL! **YOU** ASKED FOR 10,000 YEN!!
This is the best place to make quick money!
TALL, AND WITH THIS ATTITUDE ...
...I THOUGHT HE WAS A SLIM, BEAUTIFUL BOY...
...BUT HE WAS A GIRL...
DAMN
Maybe I should change machines.
UM...
WHAT?!
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
!

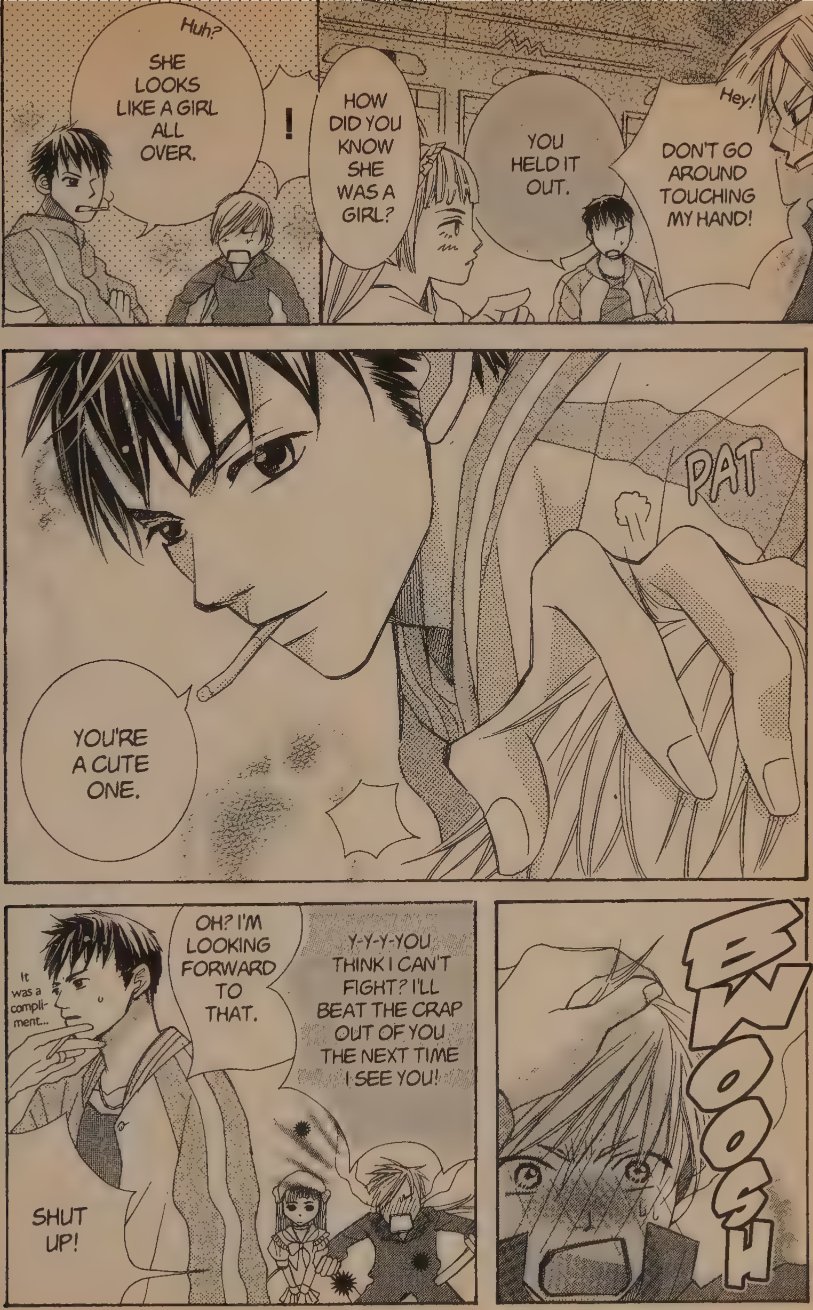

YOU LITTLE PUNK! I...I USED TO BE A BOXER!
A BOXER?!
Crap!
DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH HER!
ICHIGO!
!
PAP
THESE KIDS DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
I WAS WATCHING.

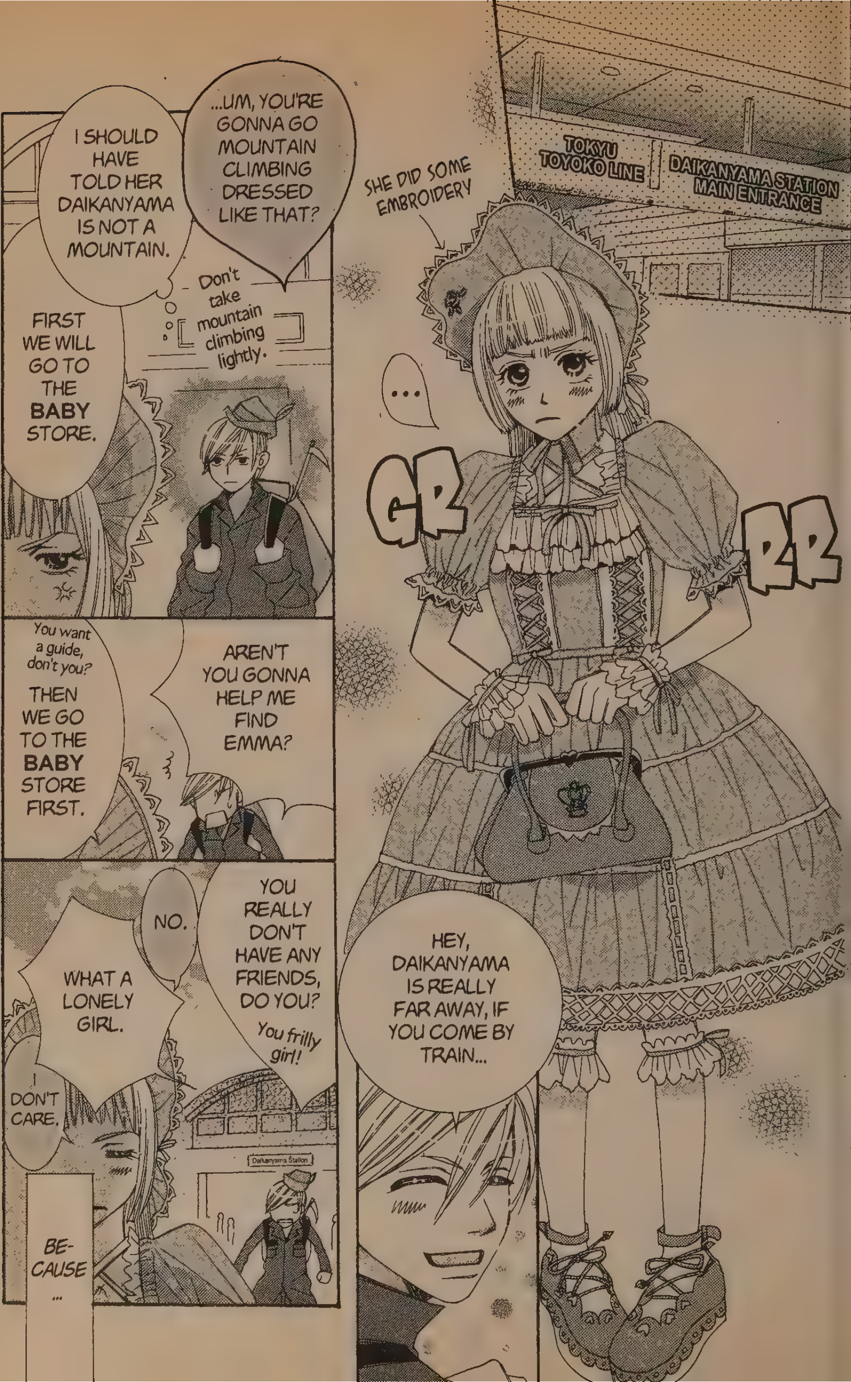

...BE YOUR FRIEND FOREVER!
I DO NOT NEED ANY FRIENDS.
WOW
TAP
HEY GIRL, YOU'RE UNDERAGE. YOU CAN'T BE PLAYING HERE.
WHAT ?
WE'LL CHECK TO SEE IF YOU CHEATED.
HUH ?
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?! WE DIDN'T CHEAT!
THEN CAN I DO A BODY CHECK?
SMIRK
He he
COULD YOU TAKE OFF YOUR JACKET?
GRAB
BAM

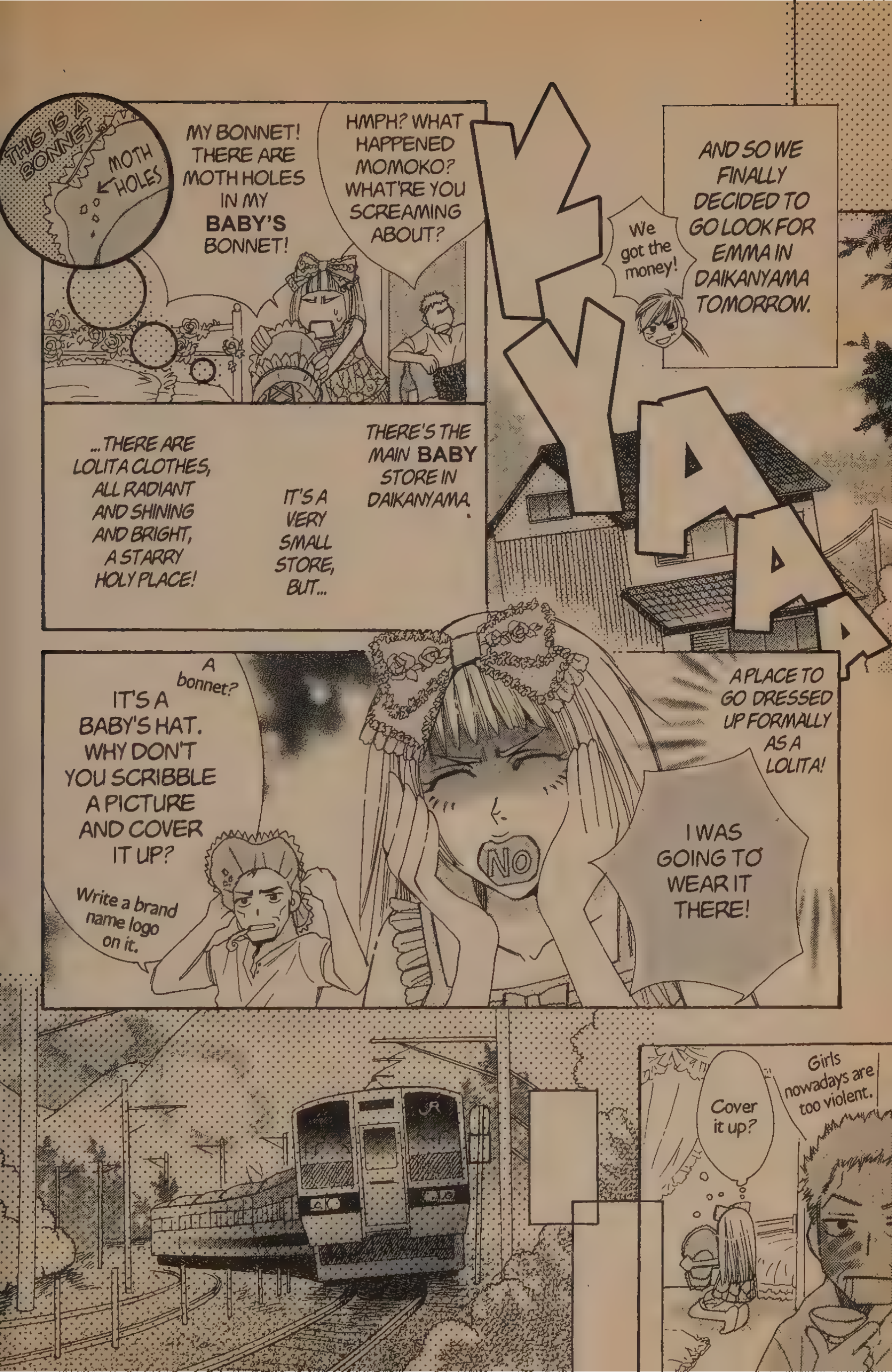

TH-THANKS...
Count the pachinko balls for these ladies.
Yes, a pachinko parlor must be loved by everybody to do good business!
...F-FOR HELPING US.
NO PROBLEM.
IF SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS AGAIN, GIVE ME A CALL.
HERE'S MY CELL-PHONE NUMBER.
OKAY...
090-XXX3-XX45
WHOOSH
ICHIGO?

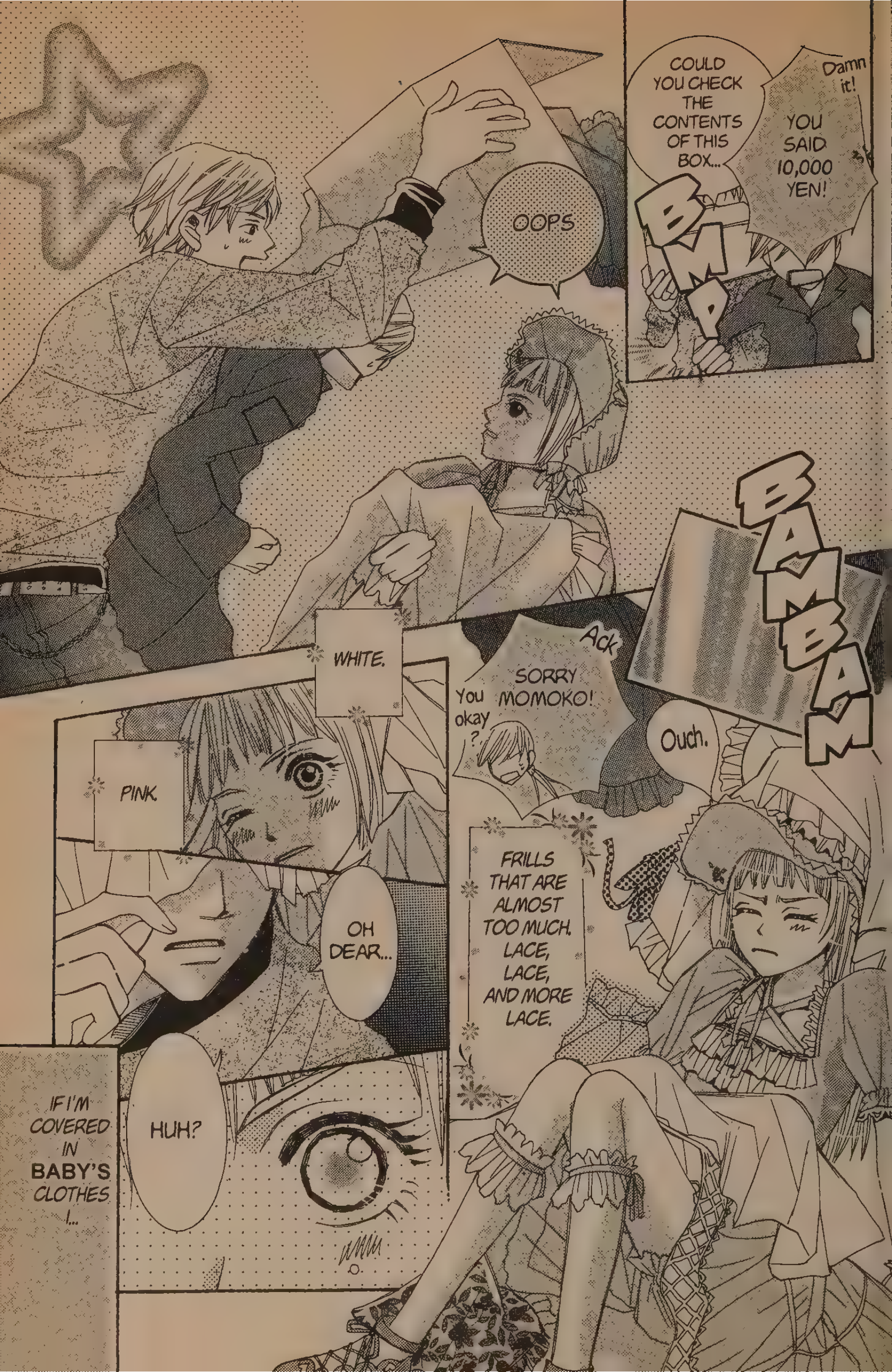

AND EVEN IF THEY DID CHEAT ...
...IT'S THE PARLOR'S FAULT YOU COULDN'T CATCH THEM.
AND IF YOU KEEP CLENCHING YOUR FIST LIKE THIS...
...YOU'LL BREAK YOUR FINGERS.
KRK
OW!
YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
IF YOU USED TO BE A BOXER.

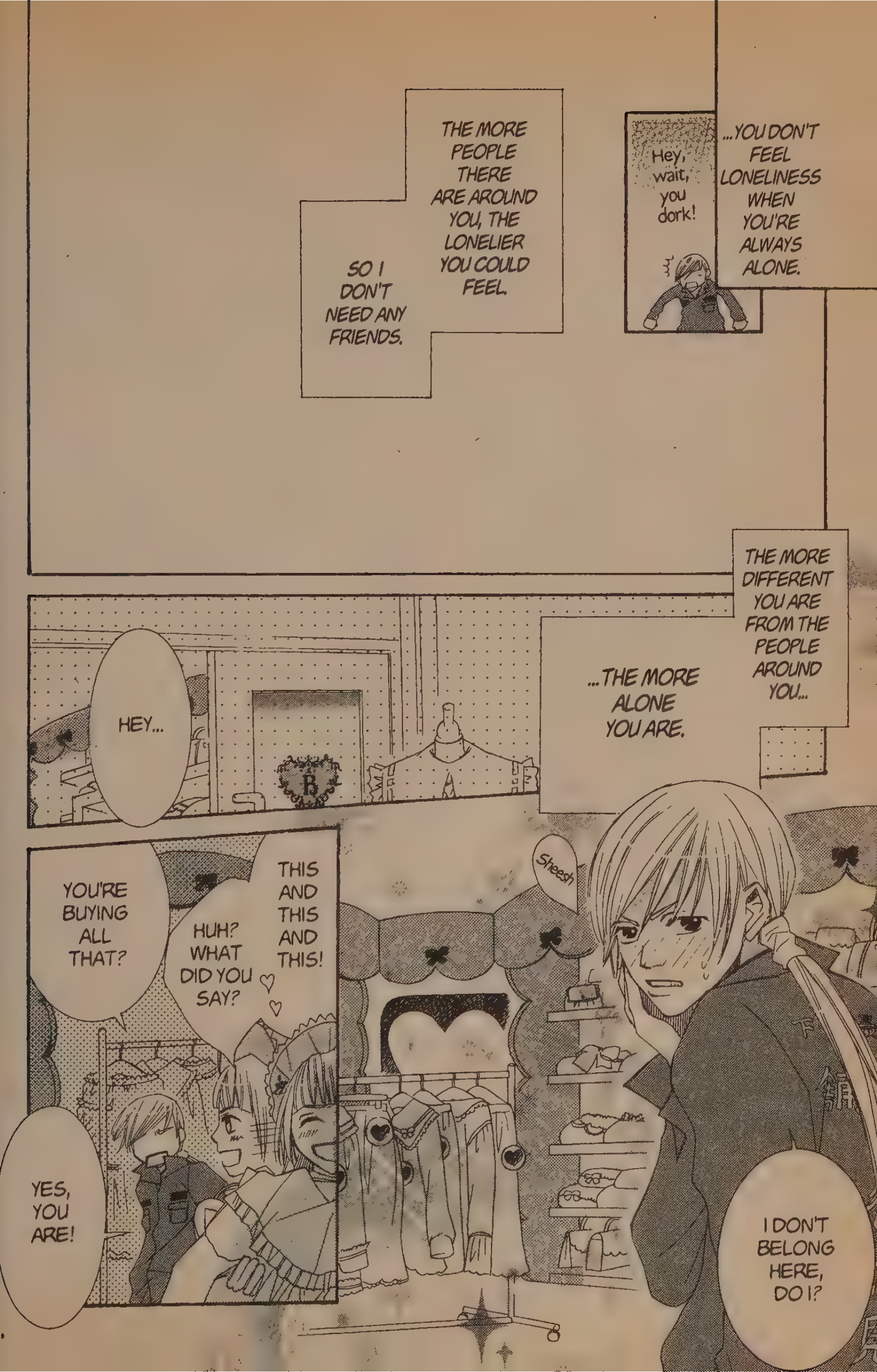

HAA
ICHIGO, ARE YOU AFRAID OF GUYS?
PSH
PSH
HAA
You're all red.
WH-WH-WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?! IF I'M FIGHTING A GUY, I CAN GRAB THEIR B*LLS, NO PROBLEM! THE NEXT TIME, I'LL GRAB HIS B...B...
YOU'RE GOING TO GRAB THEM?
UM, ANYWAY, I WAS A LITTLE UPSET BECAUSE... YOU KNOW...
MS. SHIRAYURI, THAT IS...
...BECAUSE YOU FELL IN LOVE, ISN'T IT?
YOU DON'T LOOK AT A GUY YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT LIKE THAT...
...LOOKING AT HIM UNTIL HE'S COMPLETELY OUT OF SIGHT.

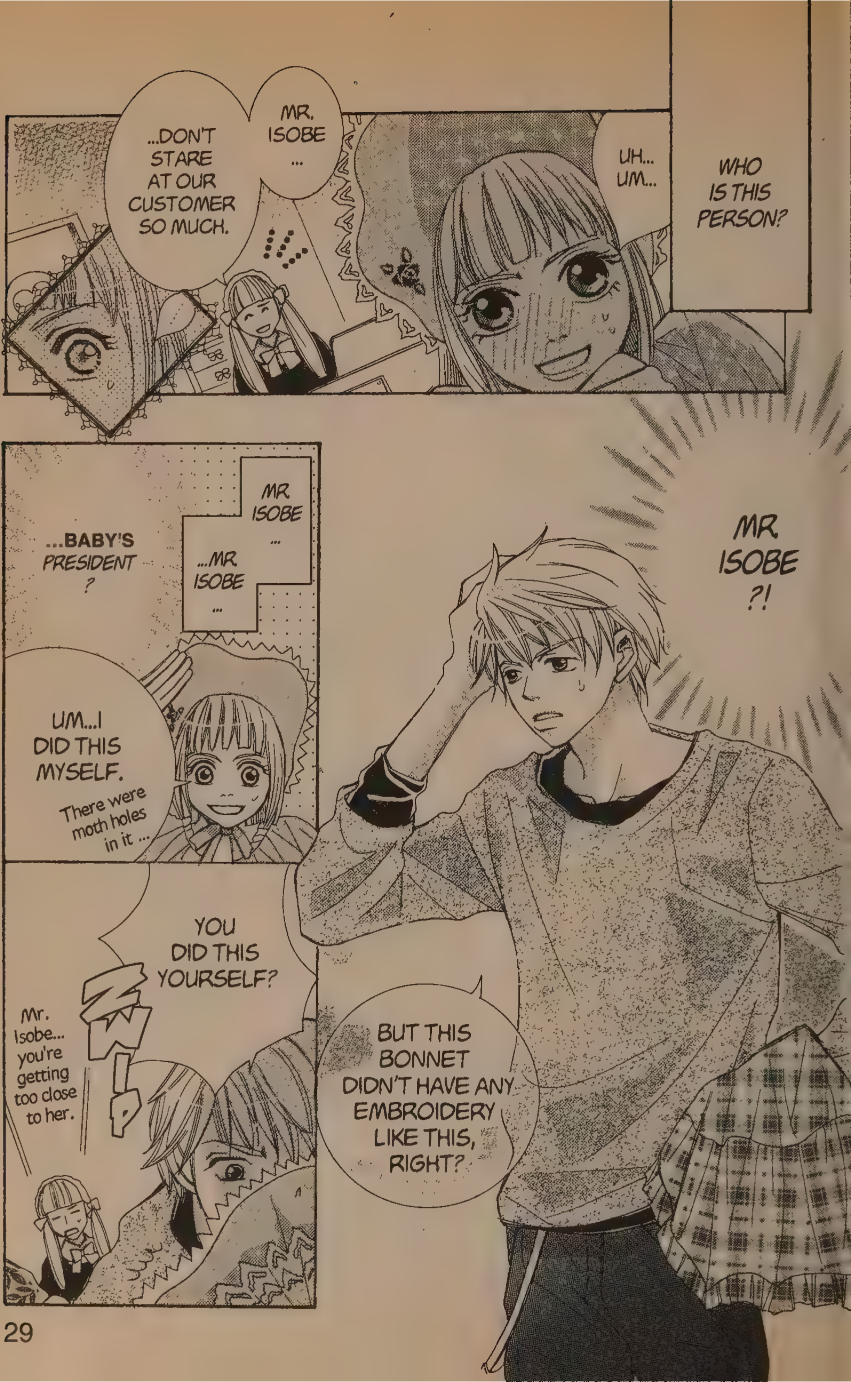

Hey!
DON'T GO AROUND TOUCHING MY HAND!
YOU HELD IT OUT.
HOW DID YOU KNOW SHE WAS A GIRL?
!
Huh?
SHE LOOKS LIKE A GIRL ALL OVER.
PAT
YOU'RE A CUTE ONE.
BWOOSH
Y-Y-Y-YOU THINK I CAN'T FIGHT? I'LL BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF YOU THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU!
OH? I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT.
It was a compliment...
SHUT UP!

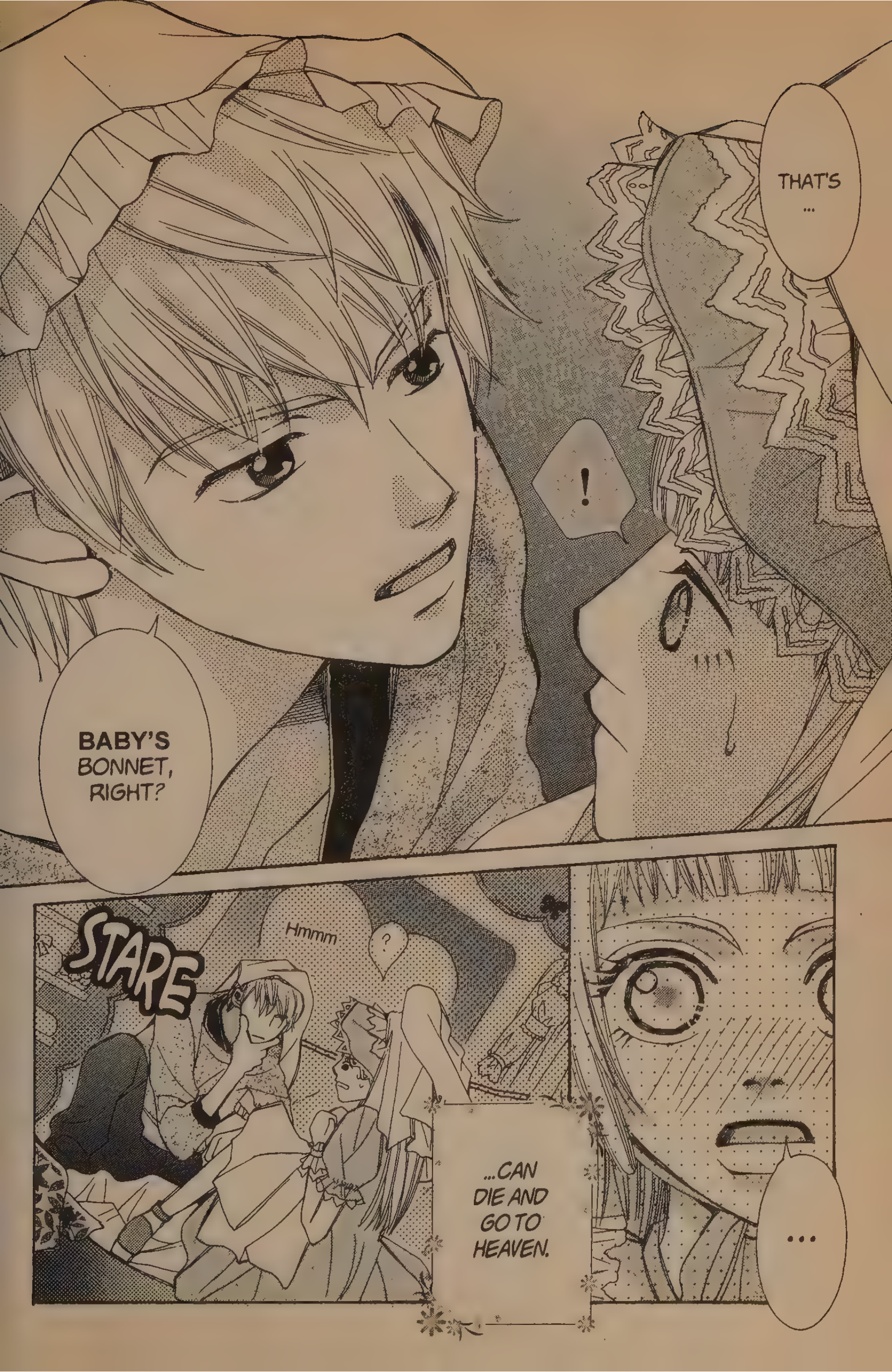

TOKYU TOYOKO LINE
DAIKANYAMA STATION MAIN ENTRANCE
SHE DID SOME EMBROIDERY
...
GR RR
HEY, DAIKANYAMA IS REALLY FAR AWAY, IF YOU COME BY TRAIN...
...UM, YOU'RE GONNA GO MOUNTAIN CLIMBING DRESSED LIKE THAT?
I SHOULD HAVE TOLD HER DAIKANYAMA IS NOT A MOUNTAIN.
[Don't take mountain climbing lightly.]
FIRST WE WILL GO TO THE **BABY** STORE.
AREN'T YOU GONNA HELP ME FIND EMMA?
You want a guide, don't you?
THEN WE GO TO THE **BABY** STORE FIRST.
YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS, DO YOU?
You frilly girl!
NO.
WHAT A LONELY GIRL.
I DON'T CARE.
Daikanyama Station
BE-CAUSE...

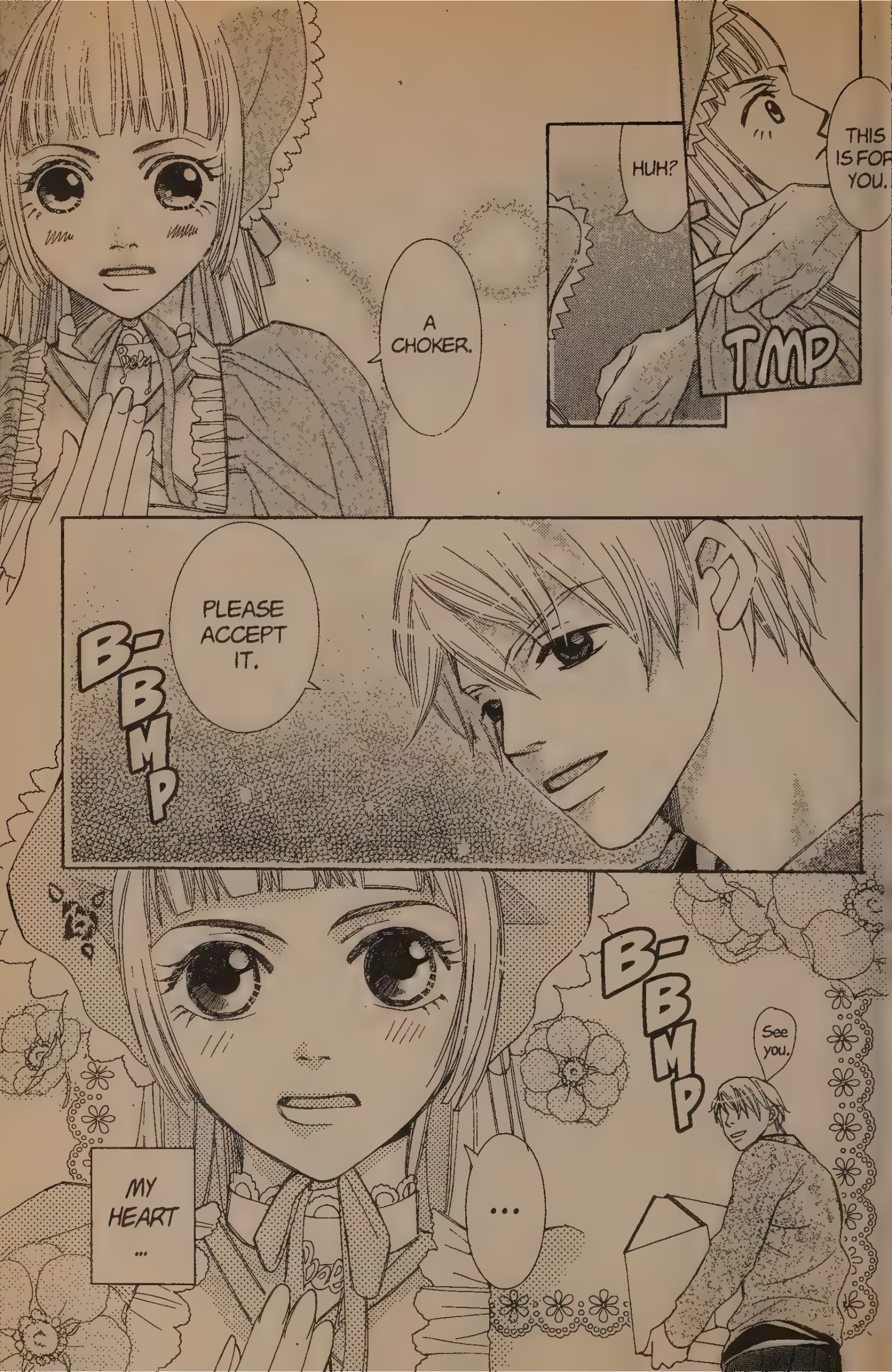

AND SO WE FINALLY DECIDED TO GO LOOK FOR EMMA IN DAIKANYAMA TOMORROW.
We got the money!
KYAAA
HMPH? WHAT HAPPENED MOMOKO? WHAT'RE YOU SCREAMING ABOUT?
MY BONNET! THERE ARE MOTH HOLES IN MY BABY'S BONNET!
THIS IS A BONNET
MOTH HOLES
THERE'S THE MAIN BABY STORE IN DAIKANYAMA.
IT'S A VERY SMALL STORE, BUT...
...THERE ARE LOLITA CLOTHES, ALL RADIANT AND SHINING AND BRIGHT, A STARRY HOLY PLACE!
A PLACE TO GO DRESSED UP FORMALLY AS A LOLITA!
I WAS GOING TO WEAR IT THERE!
NO
A bonnet?
IT'S A BABY'S HAT. WHY DON'T YOU SCRIBBLE A PICTURE AND COVER IT UP?
Write a brand name logo on it.
Girls nowadays are too violent.
Cover it up?

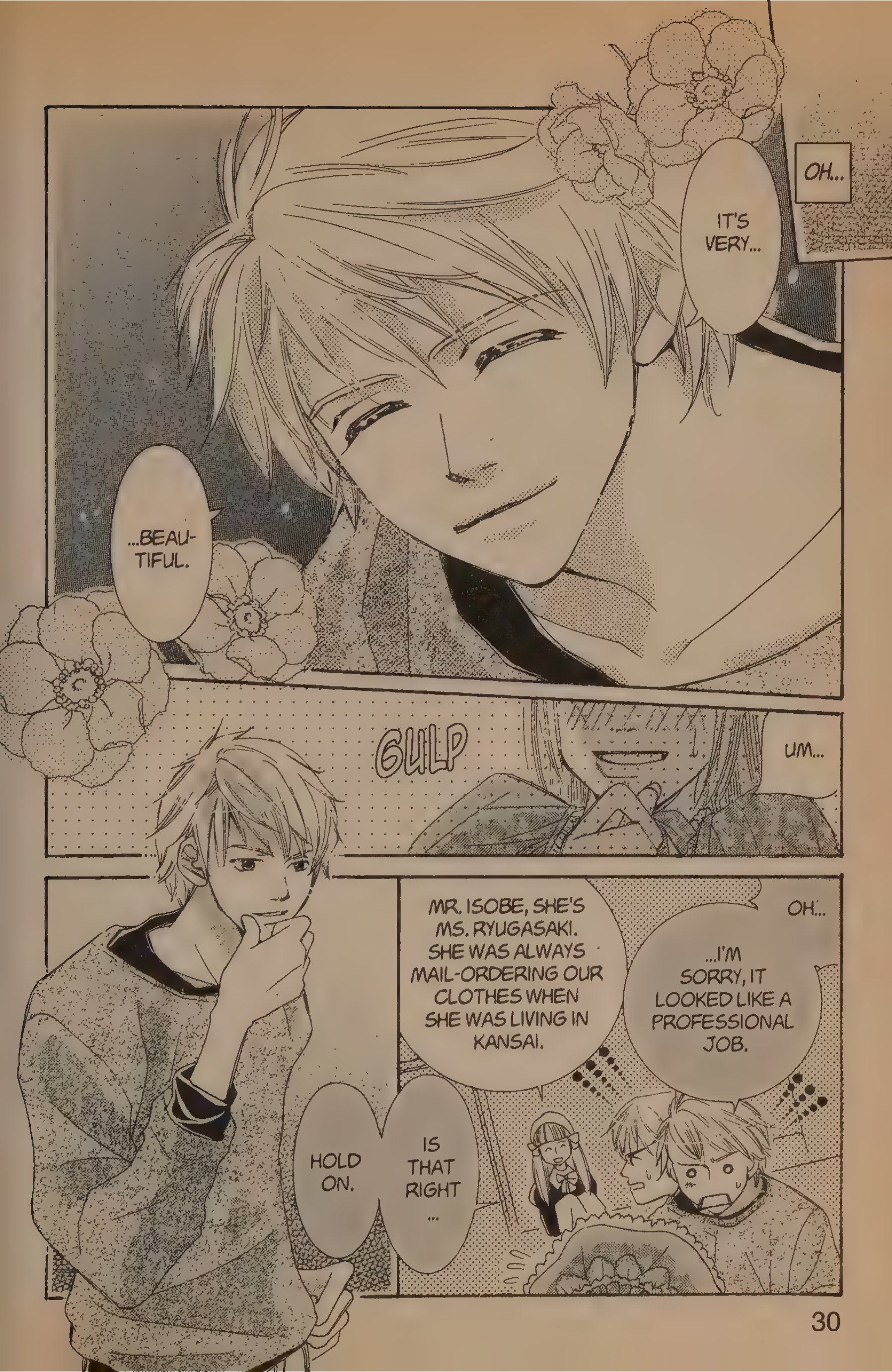

COULD YOU CHECK THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOX...
Damn it!
YOU SAID 10,000 YEN!
BMP
OOPS
BAMBAM
Ack
SORRY MOMOKO!
You okay?
Ouch.
WHITE.
PINK.
FRILLS THAT ARE ALMOST TOO MUCH. LACE, LACE, AND MORE LACE.
OH DEAR...
HUH?
IF I'M COVERED IN BABY'S CLOTHES I...

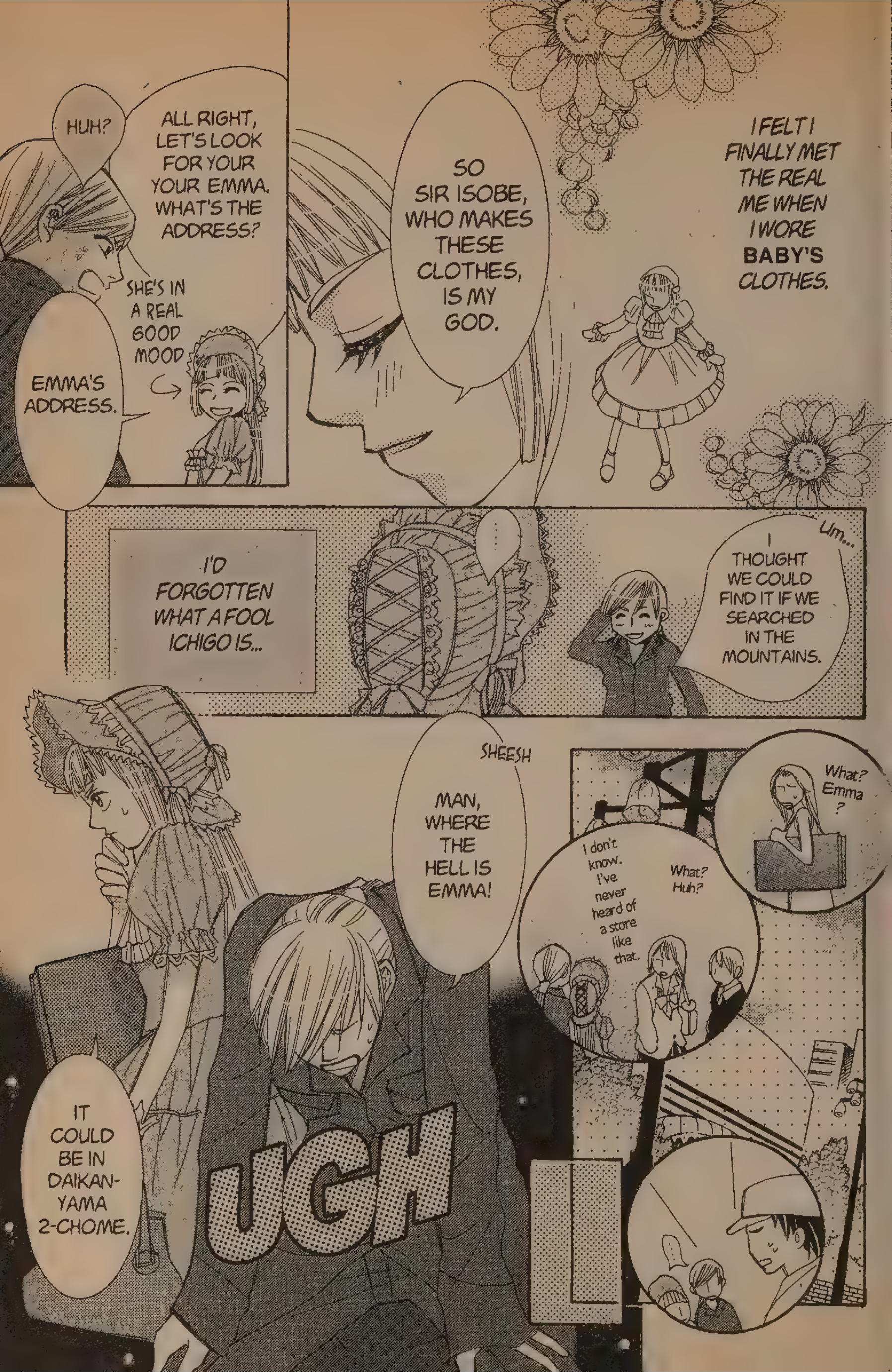

...YOU DON'T FEEL LONELINESS WHEN YOU'RE ALWAYS ALONE.
Hey, wait, you dork!
THE MORE PEOPLE THERE ARE AROUND YOU, THE LONELIER YOU COULD FEEL.
SO I DON'T NEED ANY FRIENDS.
THE MORE DIFFERENT YOU ARE FROM THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU...
...THE MORE ALONE YOU ARE.
HEY...
Sheesh
I DON'T BELONG HERE, DO I?
THIS AND THIS AND THIS! ♡ ♡
HUH? WHAT DID YOU SAY?
YOU'RE BUYING ALL THAT?
YES, YOU ARE!

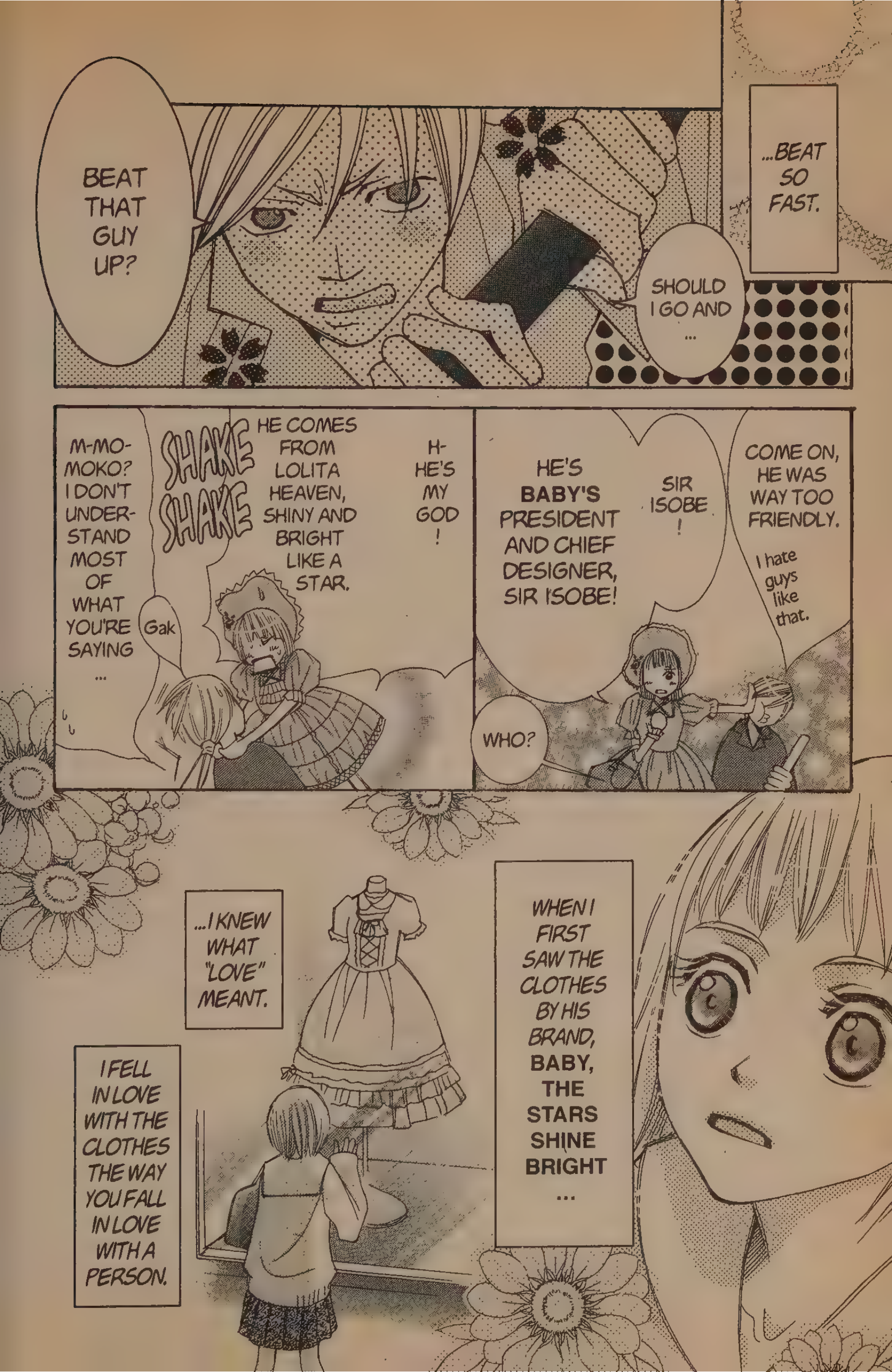

WHO IS THIS PERSON?
UH... UM...
MR. ISOBE ...
...DON'T STARE AT OUR CUSTOMER SO MUCH.
MR. ISOBE ?!
MR. ISOBE ...
...MR. ISOBE ...
...BABY'S PRESIDENT ?
UM...I DID THIS MYSELF.
There were moth holes in it ...
BUT THIS BONNET DIDN'T HAVE ANY EMBROIDERY LIKE THIS, RIGHT?
YOU DID THIS YOURSELF?
ZWIP
Mr. Isobe... you're getting too close to her.

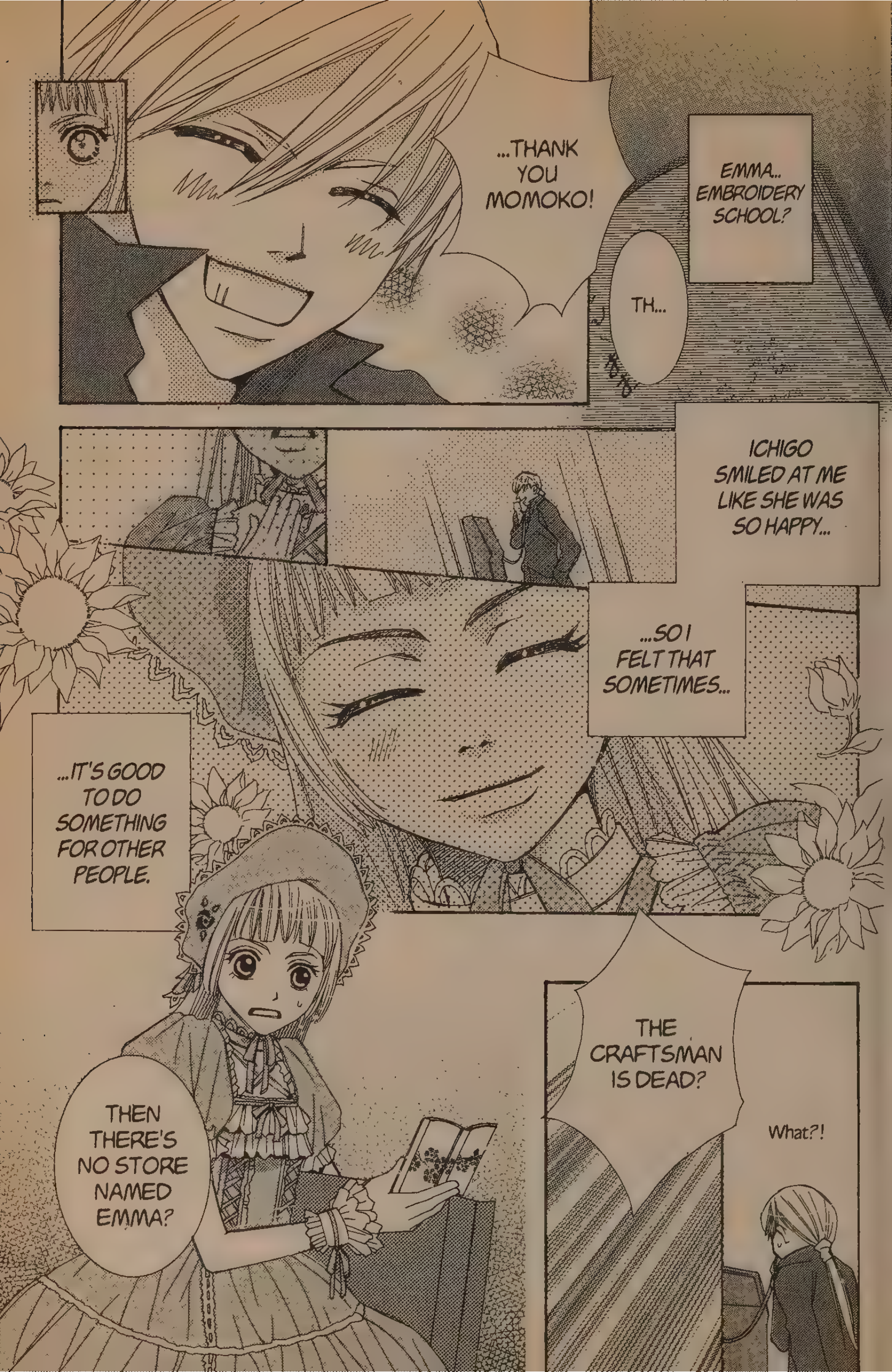

THAT'S ...
!
BABY'S BONNET, RIGHT?
...
STARE
Hmmm
?
...CAN DIE AND GO TO HEAVEN.

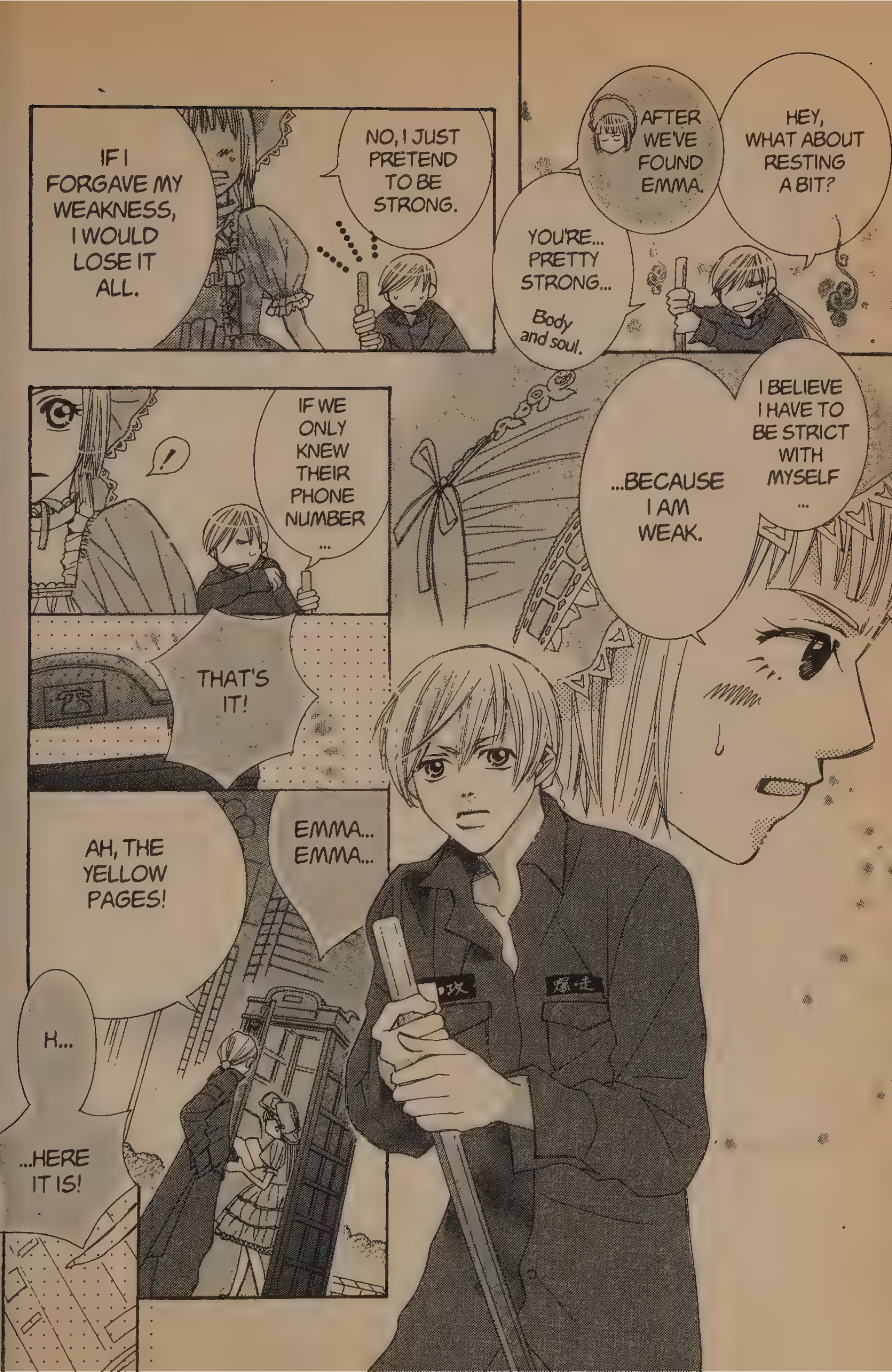

THIS IS FOR YOU.
TMP
HUH?
A CHOKER.
PLEASE ACCEPT IT.
B-BMP
B-BMP
See you.
...
MY HEART ...

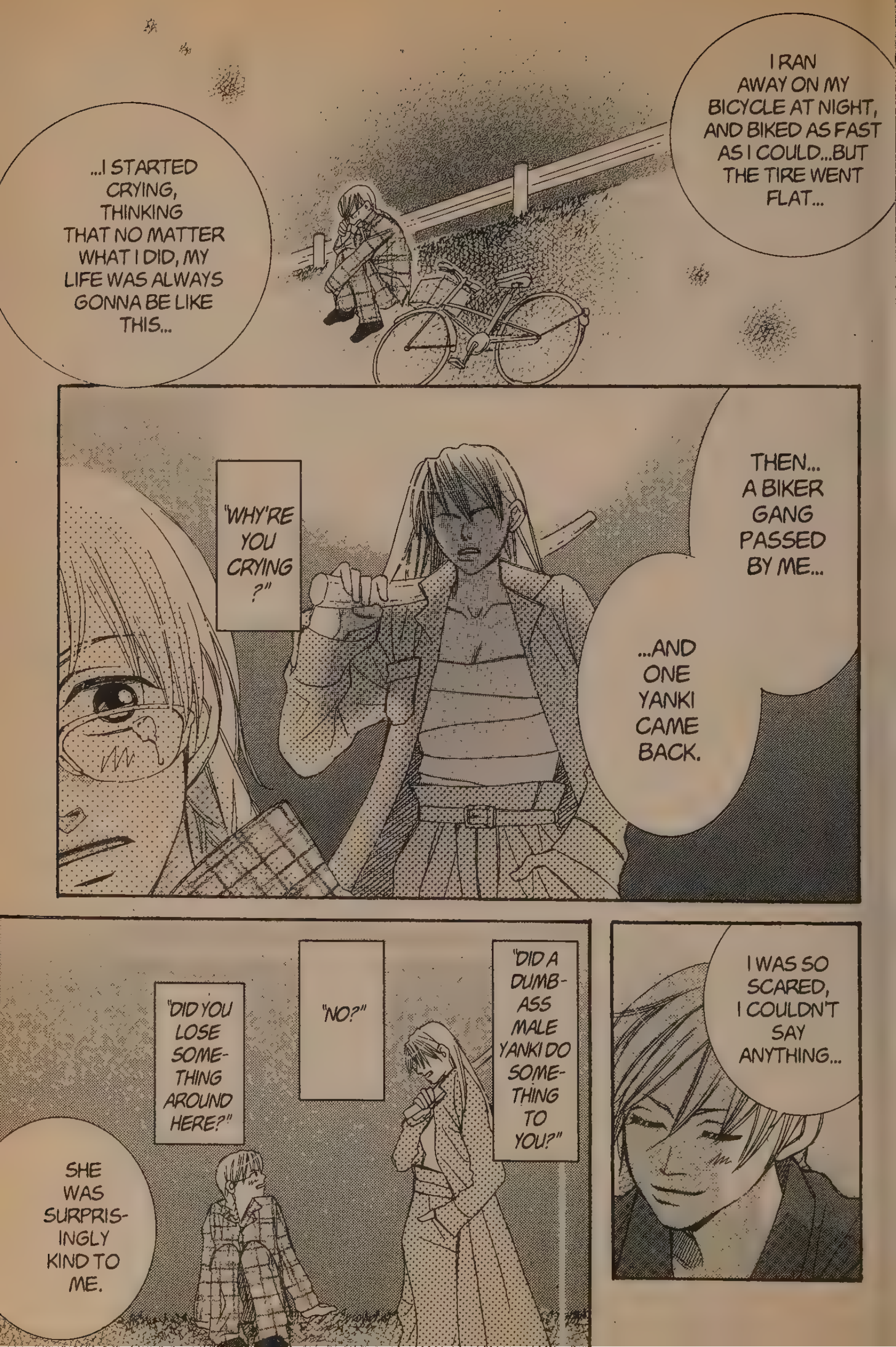

OH...
IT'S VERY...
...BEAUTIFUL.
UM...
GULP
OH...
...I'M SORRY, IT LOOKED LIKE A PROFESSIONAL JOB.
MR. ISOBE, SHE'S MS. RYUGASAKI. SHE WAS ALWAYS MAIL-ORDERING OUR CLOTHES WHEN SHE WAS LIVING IN KANSAI.
IS THAT RIGHT...
HOLD ON.

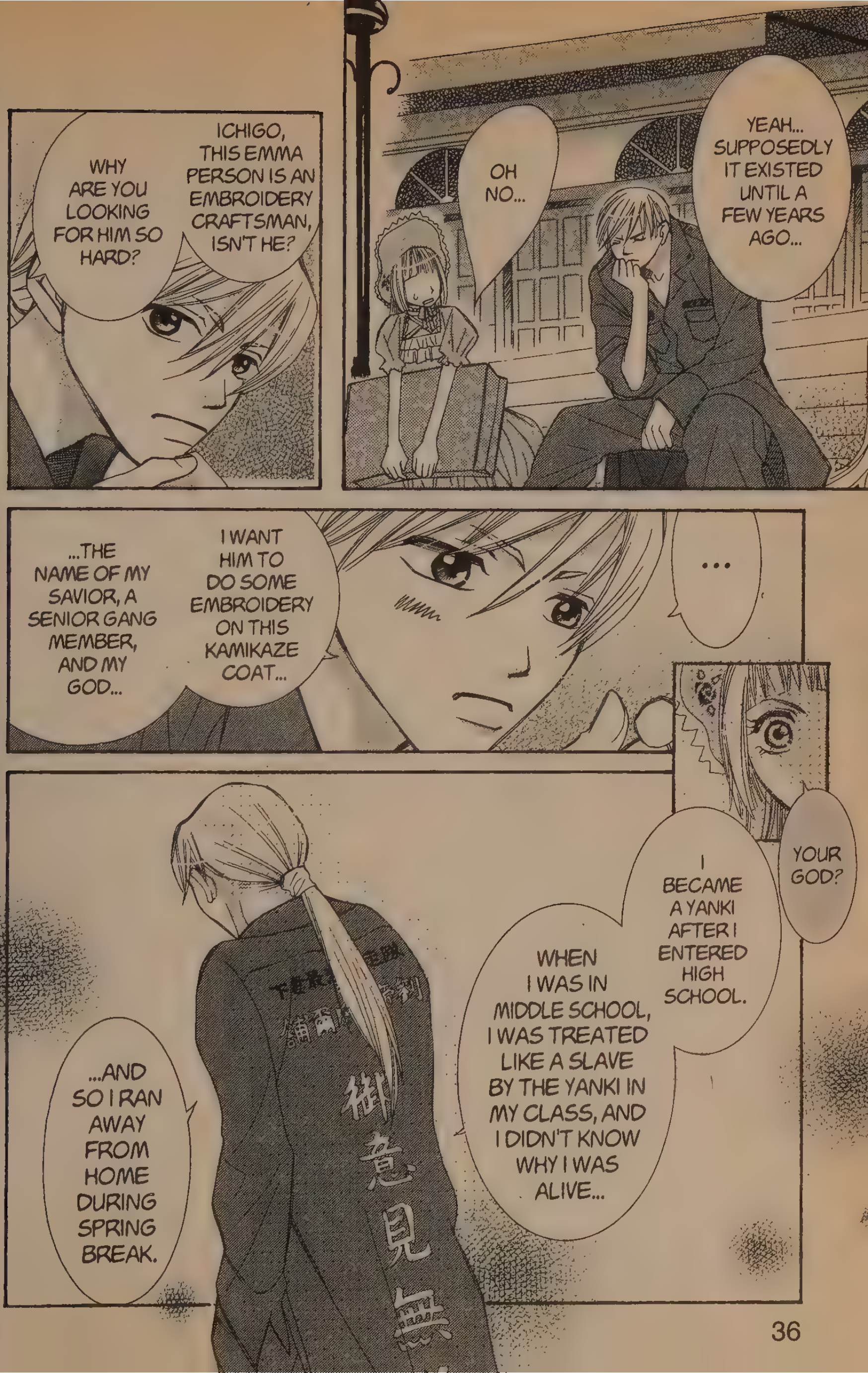

I FELT I FINALLY MET THE REAL ME WHEN I WORE BABY'S CLOTHES.
SO SIR ISOBE, WHO MAKES THESE CLOTHES, IS MY GOD.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S LOOK FOR YOUR YOUR EMMA. WHAT'S THE ADDRESS?
HUH?
SHE'S IN A REAL GOOD MOOD
EMMA'S ADDRESS.
Um...
I THOUGHT WE COULD FIND IT IF WE SEARCHED IN THE MOUNTAINS.
...
I'D FORGOTTEN WHAT A FOOL ICHIGO IS...
What? Emma?
What? Huh?
I don't know. I've never heard of a store like that.
SHEESH
MAN, WHERE THE HELL IS EMMA!
UGH
!
IT COULD BE IN DAIKAN-YAMA 2-CHOME.

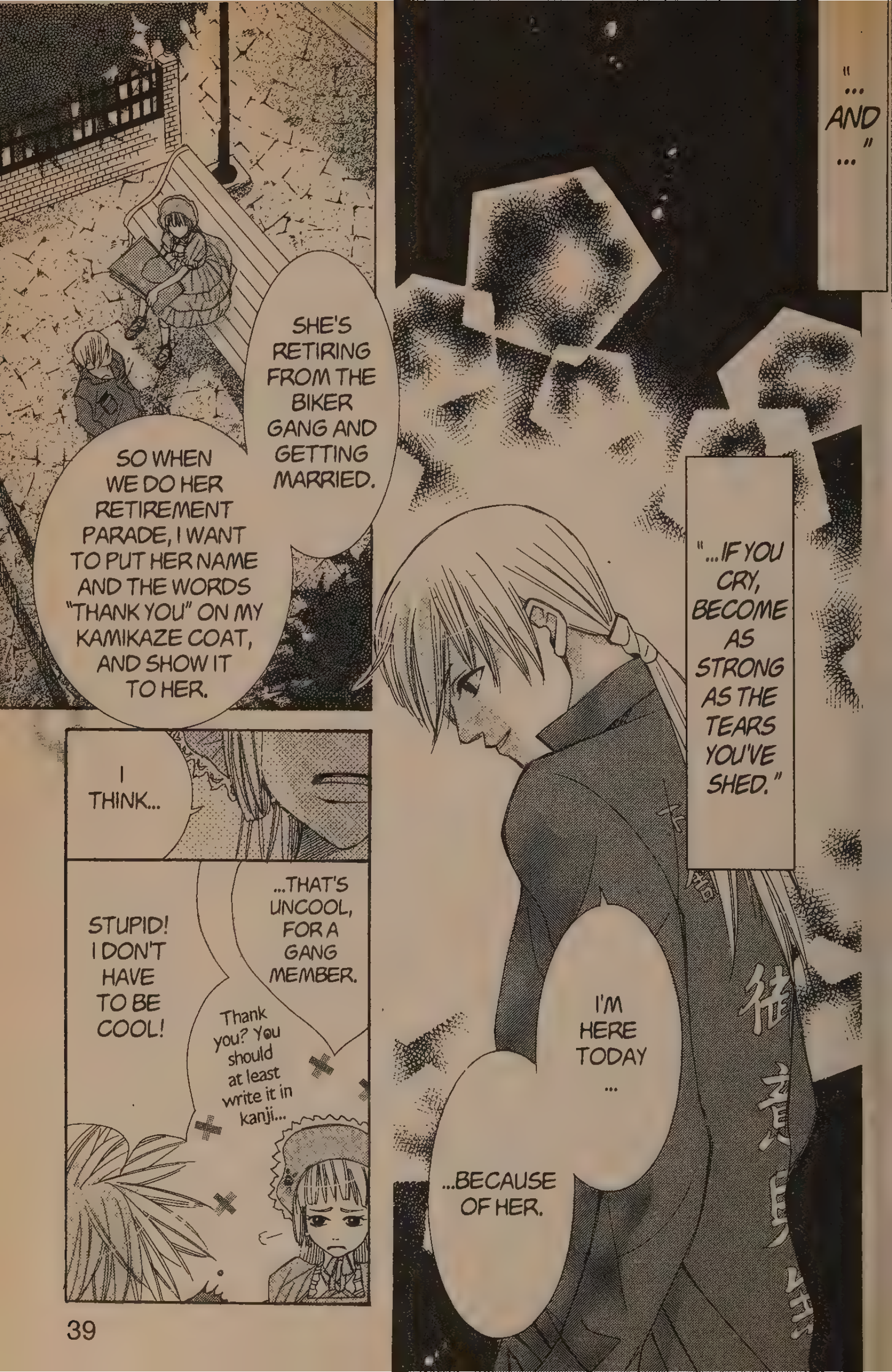

...BEAT SO FAST.
SHOULD I GO AND ...
BEAT THAT GUY UP?
COME ON, HE WAS WAY TOO FRIENDLY.
I hate guys like that.
SIR ISOBE!
HE'S **BABY'S** PRESIDENT AND CHIEF DESIGNER, SIR ISOBE!
WHO?
H-HE'S MY GOD!
HE COMES FROM LOLITA HEAVEN, SHINY AND BRIGHT LIKE A STAR.
SHAKE SHAKE
Gak
M-MO-MOKO? I DON'T UNDERSTAND MOST OF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ...
WHEN I FIRST SAW THE CLOTHES BY HIS BRAND, **BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT** ...
...I KNEW WHAT "LOVE" MEANT.
I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE CLOTHES THE WAY YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH A PERSON.

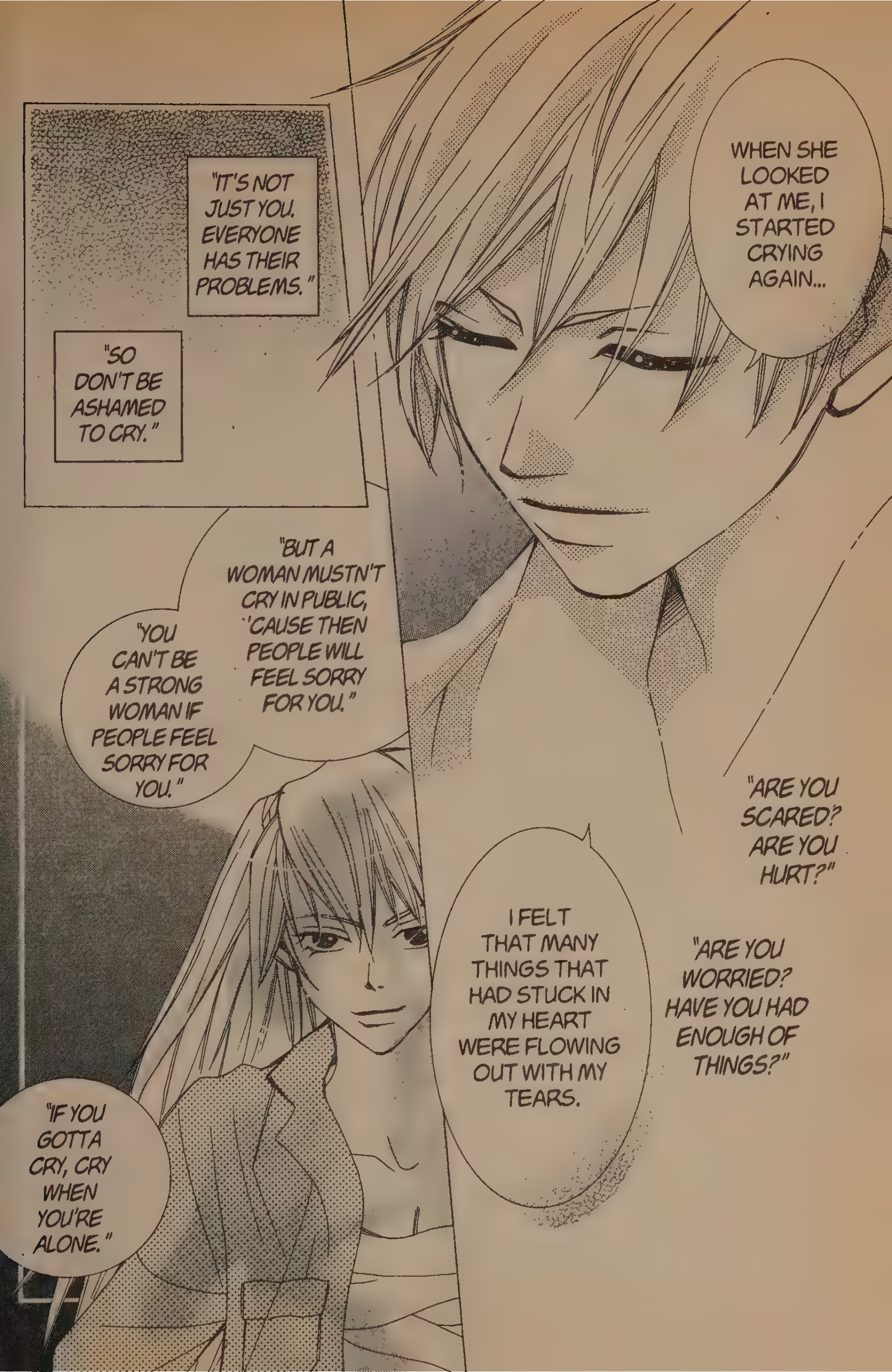

EMMA... EMBROIDERY SCHOOL?
TH...
...THANK YOU MOMOKO!
ICHIGO SMILED AT ME LIKE SHE WAS SO HAPPY...
...SO I FELT THAT SOMETIMES...
...IT'S GOOD TO DO SOMETHING FOR OTHER PEOPLE.
What?!
THE CRAFTSMAN IS DEAD?
THEN THERE'S NO STORE NAMED EMMA?

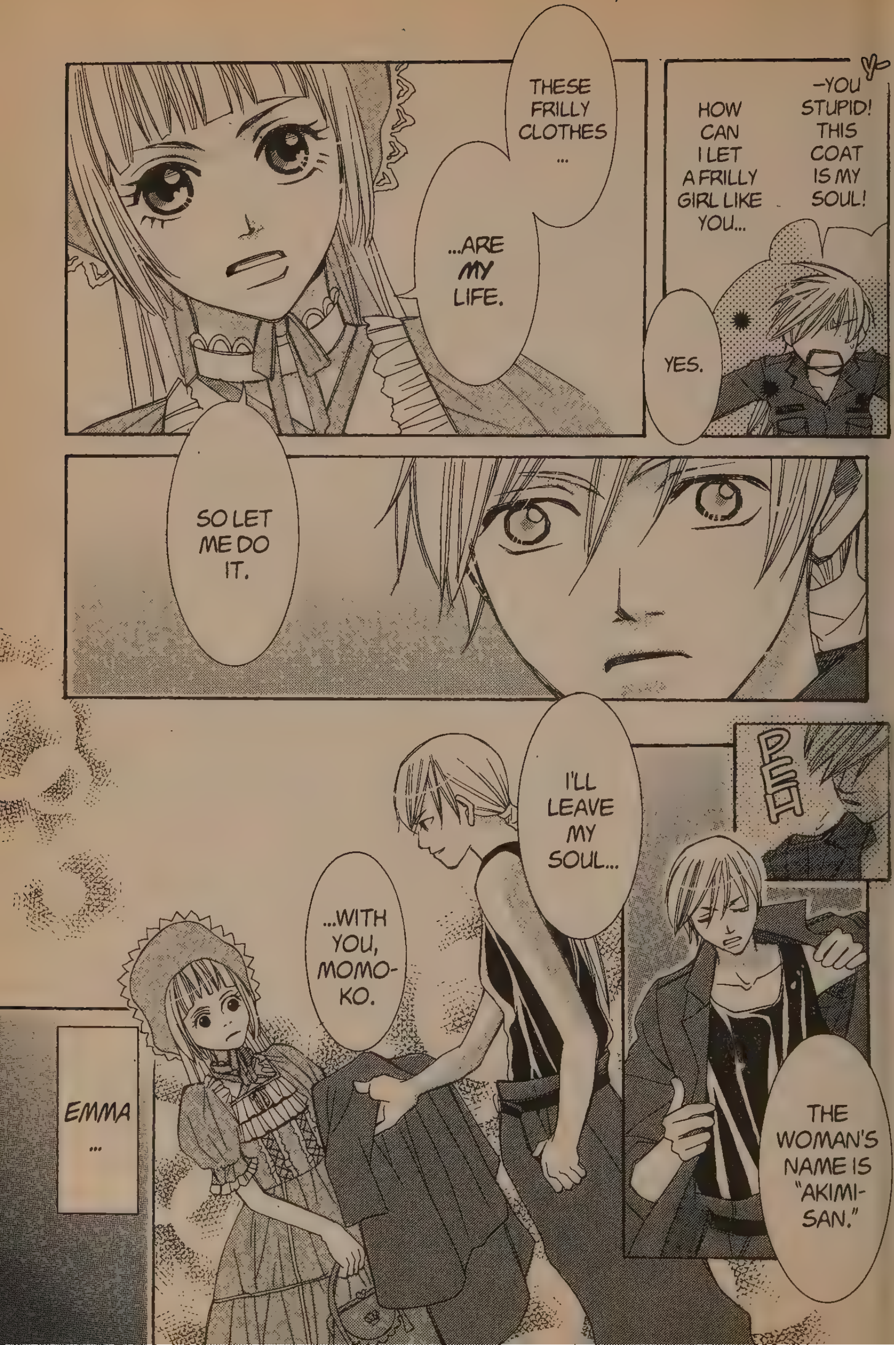

HEY, WHAT ABOUT RESTING A BIT?
AFTER WE'VE FOUND EMMA.
YOU'RE... PRETTY STRONG... Body and soul.
NO, I JUST PRETEND TO BE STRONG.
IF I FORGAVE MY WEAKNESS, I WOULD LOSE IT ALL.
I BELIEVE I HAVE TO BE STRICT WITH MYSELF...
...BECAUSE I AM WEAK.
IF WE ONLY KNEW THEIR PHONE NUMBER...
!
THAT'S IT!
爆走
EMMA... EMMA...
AH, THE YELLOW PAGES!
H...
...HERE IT IS!

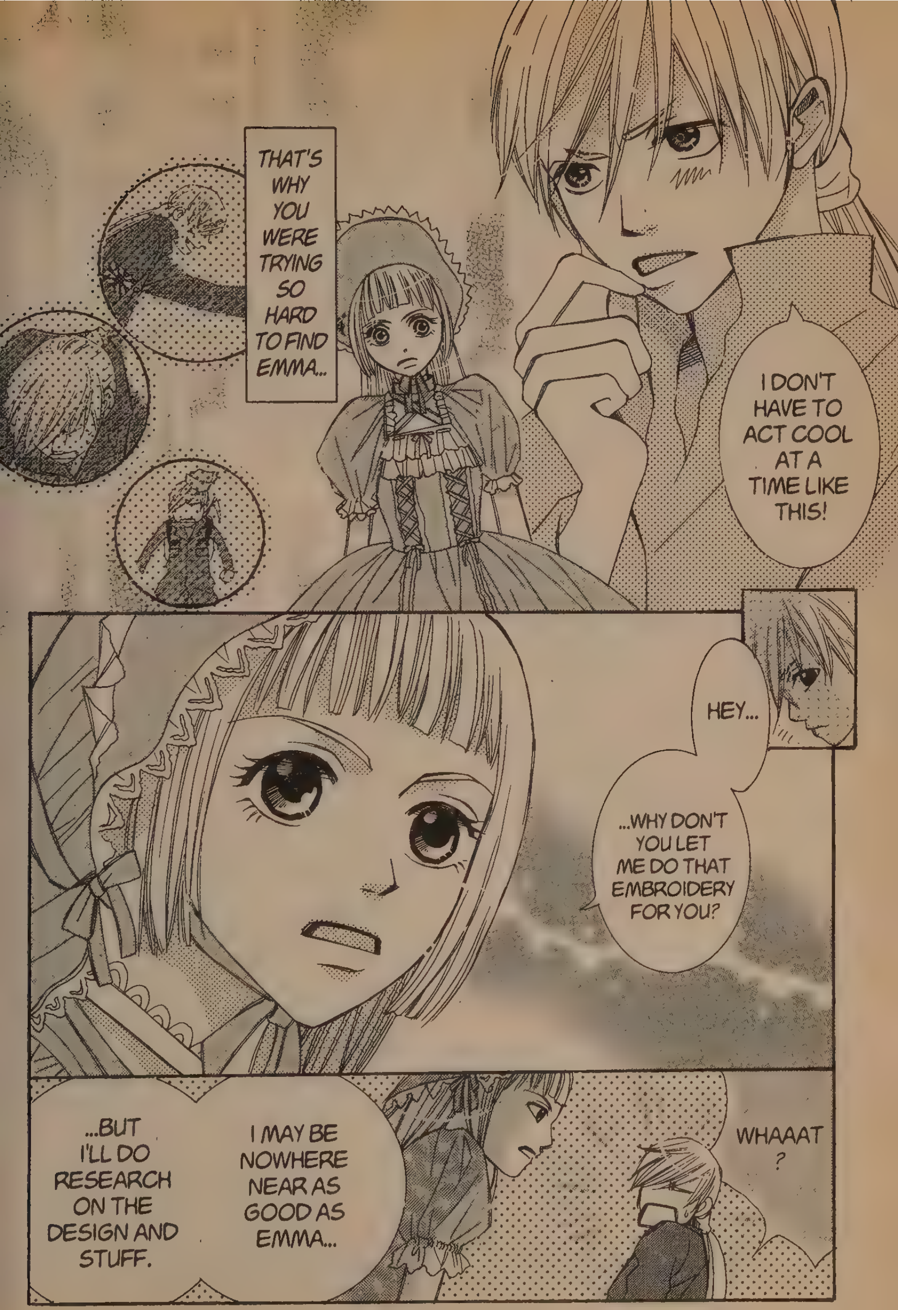

I RAN AWAY ON MY BICYCLE AT NIGHT, AND BIKED AS FAST AS I COULD...BUT THE TIRE WENT FLAT...
...I STARTED CRYING, THINKING THAT NO MATTER WHAT I DID, MY LIFE WAS ALWAYS GONNA BE LIKE THIS...
THEN... A BIKER GANG PASSED BY ME...
...AND ONE YANKI CAME BACK.
"WHY'RE YOU CRYING?"
I WAS SO SCARED, I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING...
"DID A DUMBASS MALE YANKI DO SOMETHING TO YOU?"
"NO?"
"DID YOU LOSE SOMETHING AROUND HERE?"
SHE WAS SURPRISINGLY KIND TO ME.

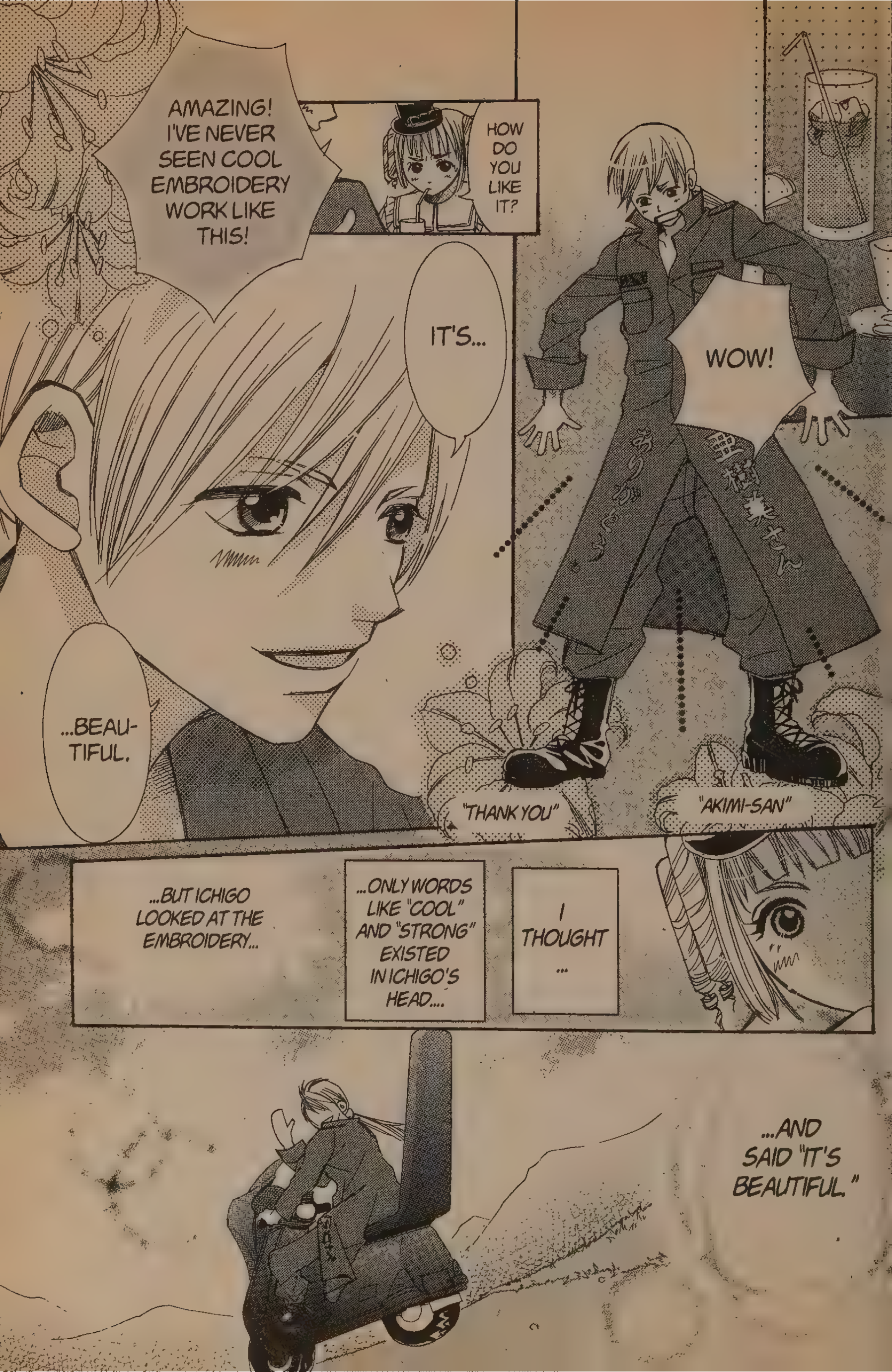

YEAH... SUPPOSEDLY IT EXISTED UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO...
OH NO...
ICHIGO, THIS EMMA PERSON IS AN EMBROIDERY CRAFTSMAN, ISN'T HE?
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FOR HIM SO HARD?
...
I WANT HIM TO DO SOME EMBROIDERY ON THIS KAMIKAZE COAT...
...THE NAME OF MY SAVIOR, A SENIOR GANG MEMBER, AND MY GOD...
YOUR GOD?
I BECAME A YANKI AFTER I ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL.
WHEN I WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, I WAS TREATED LIKE A SLAVE BY THE YANKI IN MY CLASS, AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHY I WAS ALIVE...
...AND SO I RAN AWAY FROM HOME DURING SPRING BREAK.
御意見無

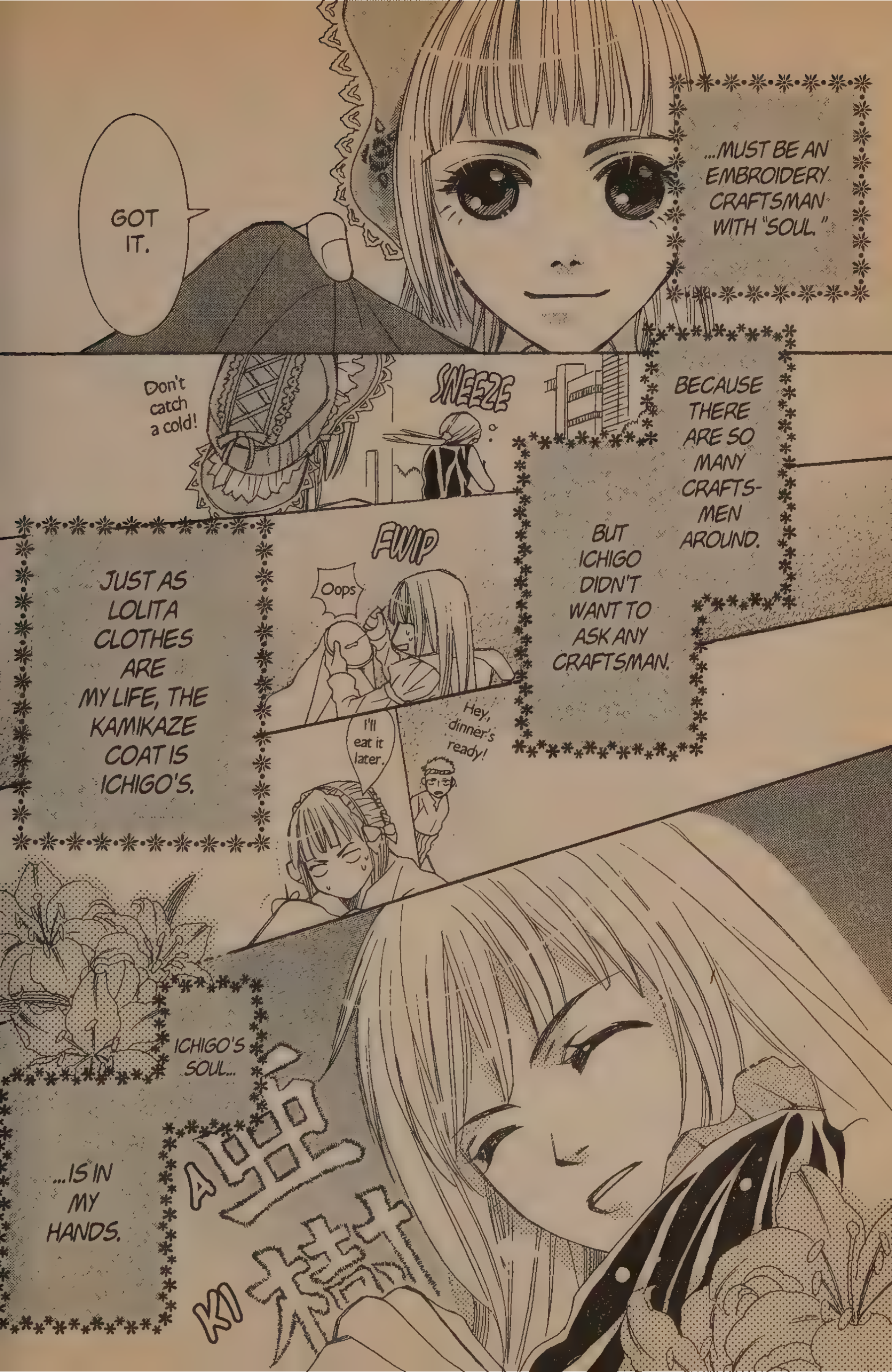

"...AND..."
"...IF YOU CRY, BECOME AS STRONG AS THE TEARS YOU'VE SHED."
I'M HERE TODAY...
...BECAUSE OF HER.
SHE'S RETIRING FROM THE BIKER GANG AND GETTING MARRIED.
SO WHEN WE DO HER RETIREMENT PARADE, I WANT TO PUT HER NAME AND THE WORDS "THANK YOU" ON MY KAMIKAZE COAT, AND SHOW IT TO HER.
I THINK...
...THAT'S UNCOOL, FOR A GANG MEMBER.
STUPID! I DON'T HAVE TO BE COOL!
Thank you? You should at least write it in kanji...

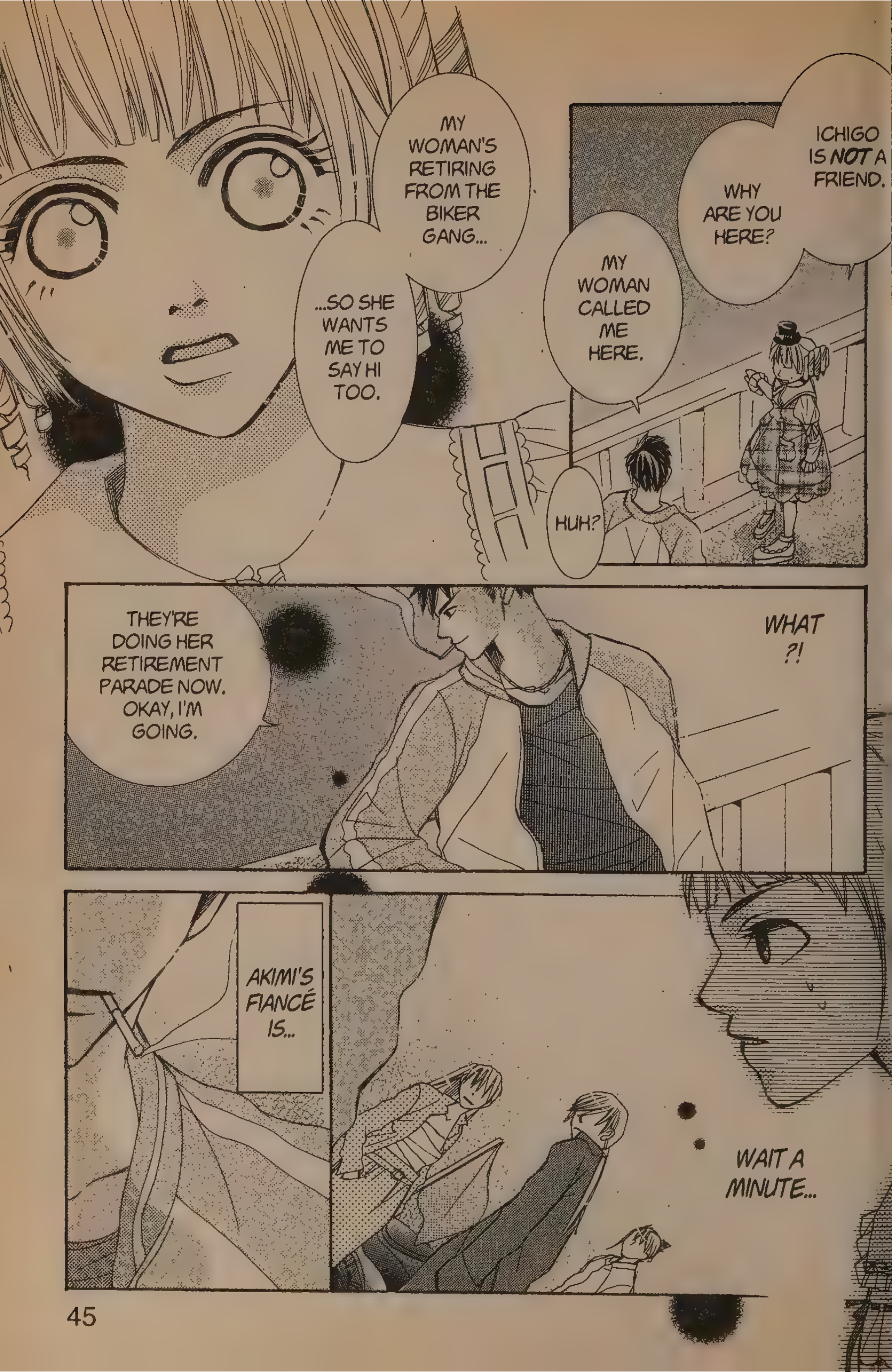

WHEN SHE LOOKED AT ME, I STARTED CRYING AGAIN...
"IT'S NOT JUST YOU. EVERYONE HAS THEIR PROBLEMS."
"SO DON'T BE ASHAMED TO CRY."
"BUT A WOMAN MUSTN'T CRY IN PUBLIC, 'CAUSE THEN PEOPLE WILL FEEL SORRY FOR YOU."
"YOU CAN'T BE A STRONG WOMAN IF PEOPLE FEEL SORRY FOR YOU."
"ARE YOU SCARED? ARE YOU HURT?"
"ARE YOU WORRIED? HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF THINGS?"
I FELT THAT MANY THINGS THAT HAD STUCK IN MY HEART WERE FLOWING OUT WITH MY TEARS.
"IF YOU GOTTA CRY, CRY WHEN YOU'RE ALONE."

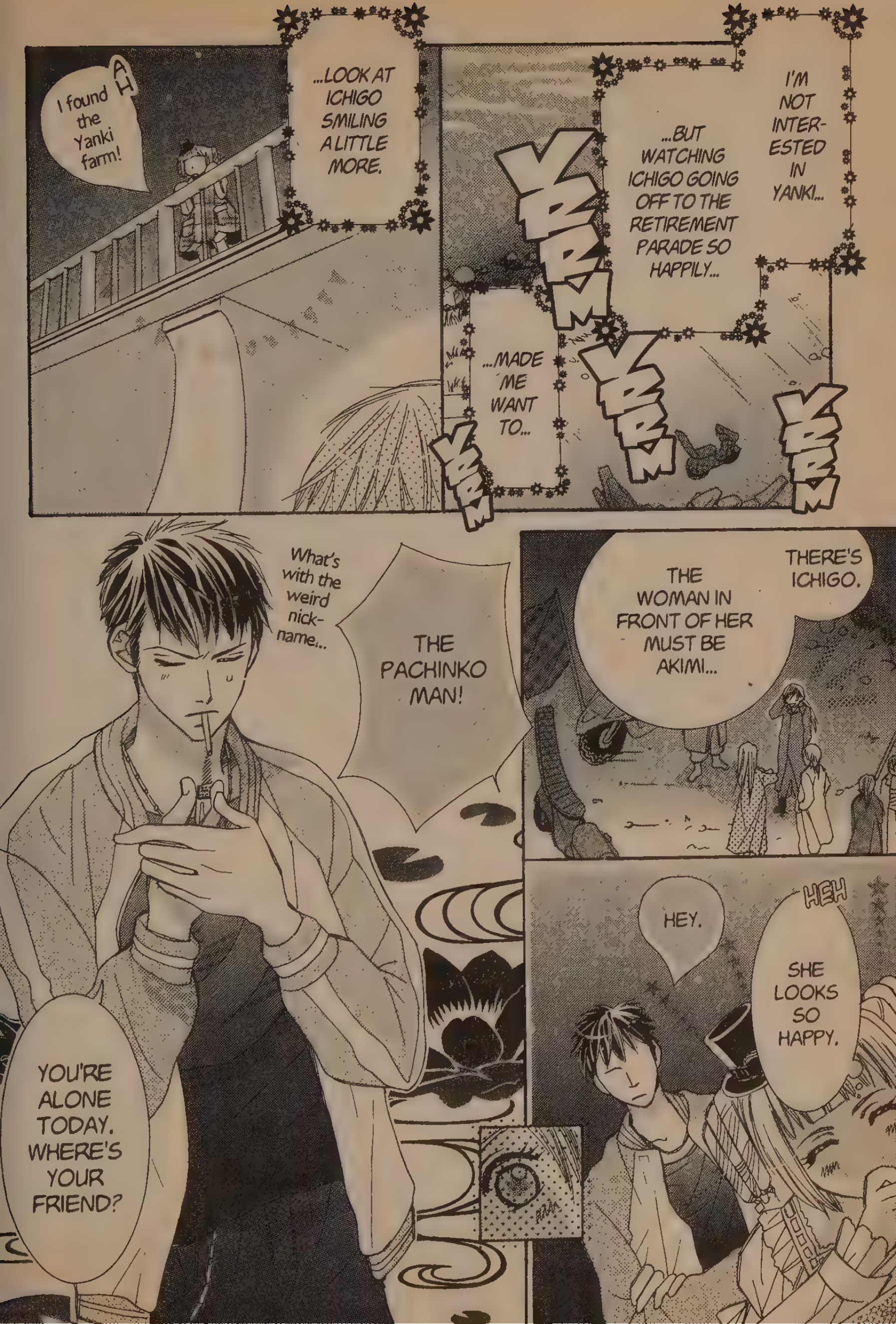

HOW CAN I LET A FRILLY GIRL LIKE YOU...
–YOU STUPID! THIS COAT IS MY SOUL!
YES.
THESE FRILLY CLOTHES...
...ARE *MY* LIFE.
SO LET ME DO IT.
PETA
THE WOMAN'S NAME IS "AKIMI-SAN."
I'LL LEAVE MY SOUL...
...WITH YOU, MOMOKO.
EMMA...

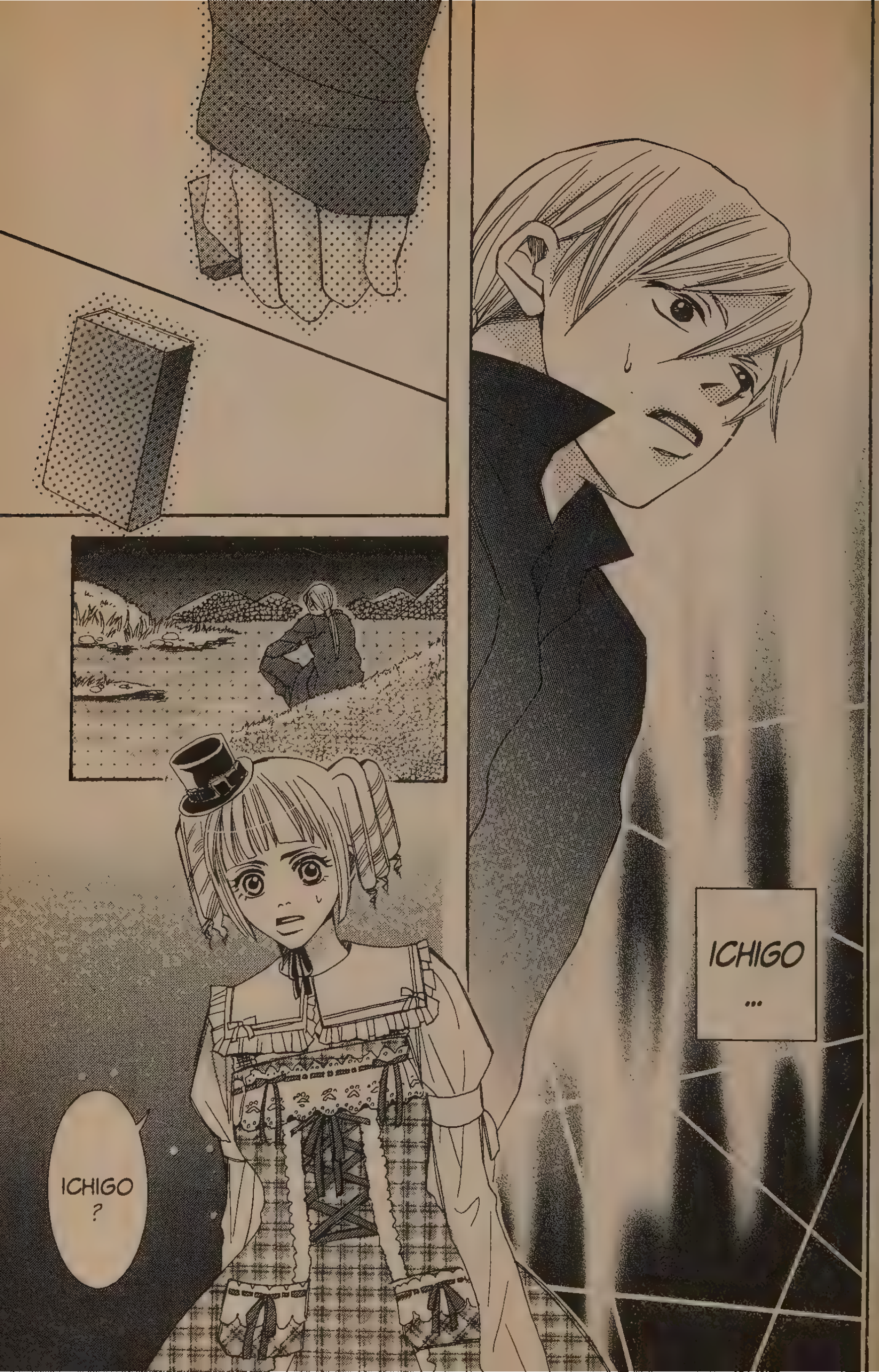

I DON'T HAVE TO ACT COOL AT A TIME LIKE THIS!
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE TRYING SO HARD TO FIND EMMA...
HEY...
...WHY DON'T YOU LET ME DO THAT EMBROIDERY FOR YOU?
WHAAAT?
I MAY BE NOWHERE NEAR AS GOOD AS EMMA...
...BUT I'LL DO RESEARCH ON THE DESIGN AND STUFF.

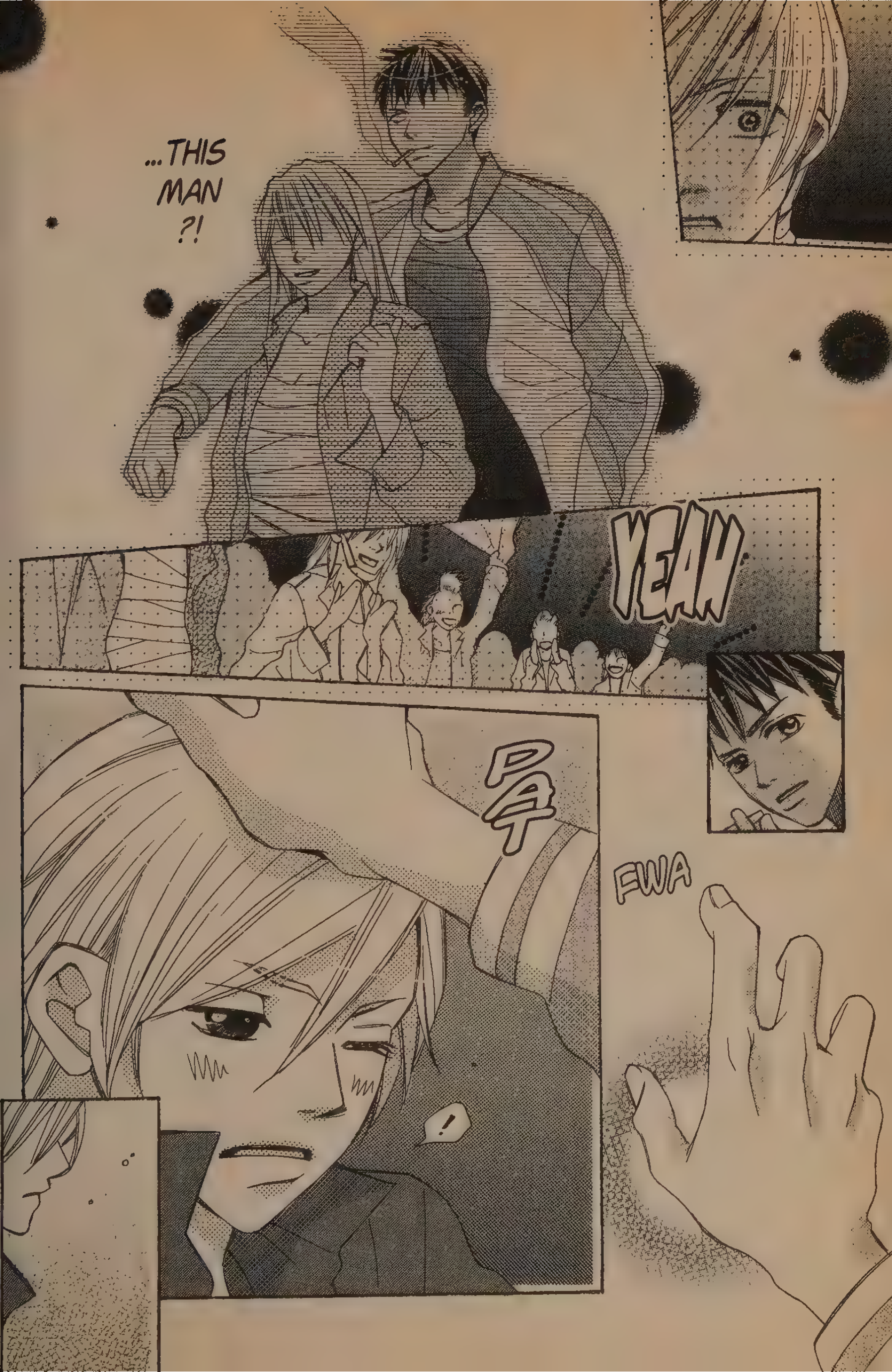

HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?
WOW!
AMAZING! I'VE NEVER SEEN COOL EMBROIDERY WORK LIKE THIS!
"THANK YOU"
"AKIMI-SAN"
IT'S...
...BEAUTIFUL.
I THOUGHT...
...ONLY WORDS LIKE "COOL" AND "STRONG" EXISTED IN ICHIGO'S HEAD...
...BUT ICHIGO LOOKED AT THE EMBROIDERY...
...AND SAID "IT'S BEAUTIFUL."

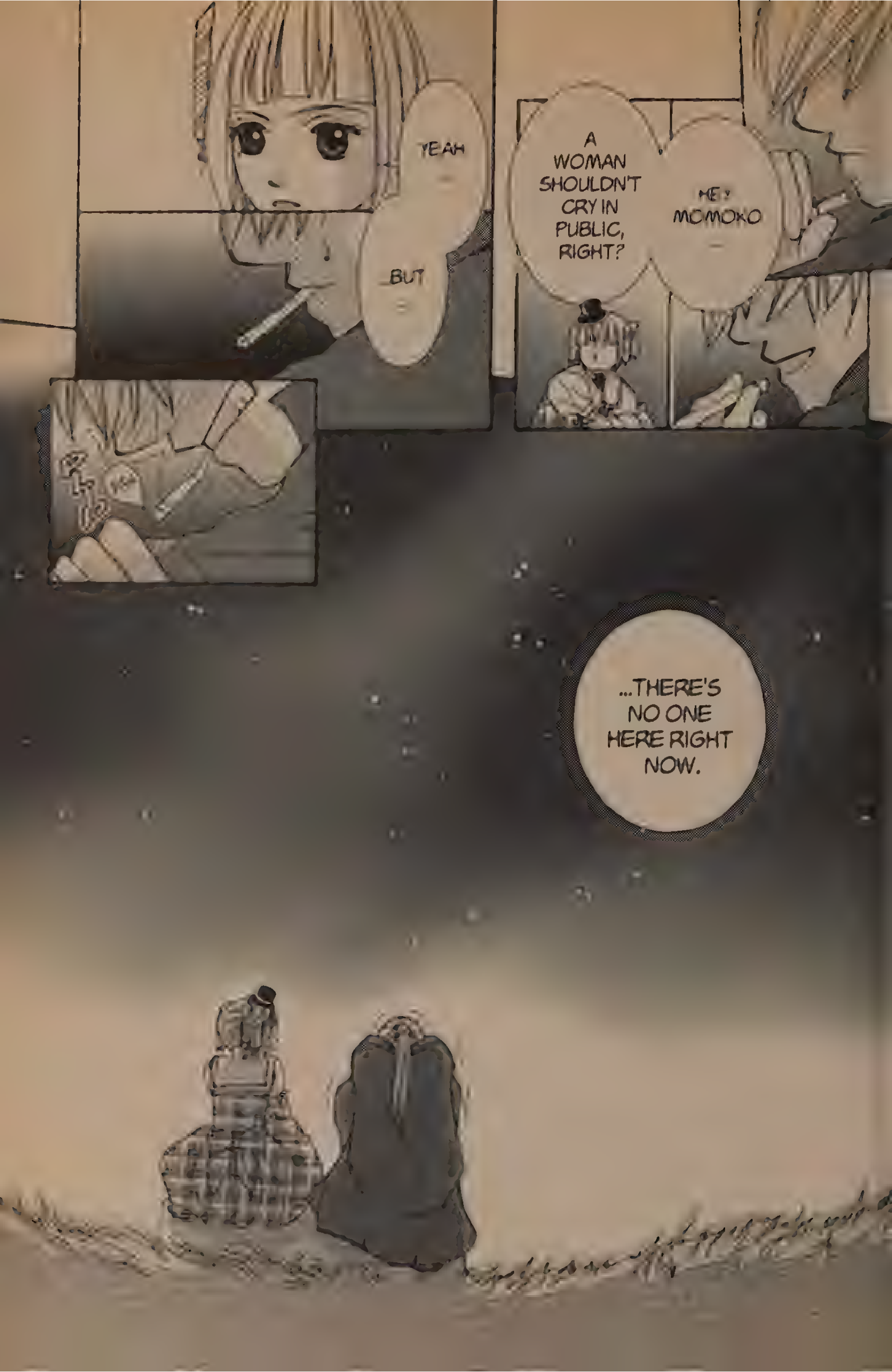

...MUST BE AN EMBROIDERY CRAFTSMAN WITH "SOUL."
GOT IT.
BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY CRAFTSMEN AROUND.
SNEEZE
Don't catch a cold!
BUT ICHIGO DIDN'T WANT TO ASK ANY CRAFTSMAN.
FWIP
Oops
JUST AS LOLITA CLOTHES ARE MY LIFE, THE KAMIKAZE COAT IS ICHIGO'S.
Hey, dinner's ready!
I'll eat it later.
ICHIGO'S SOUL...
...IS IN MY HANDS.
KI

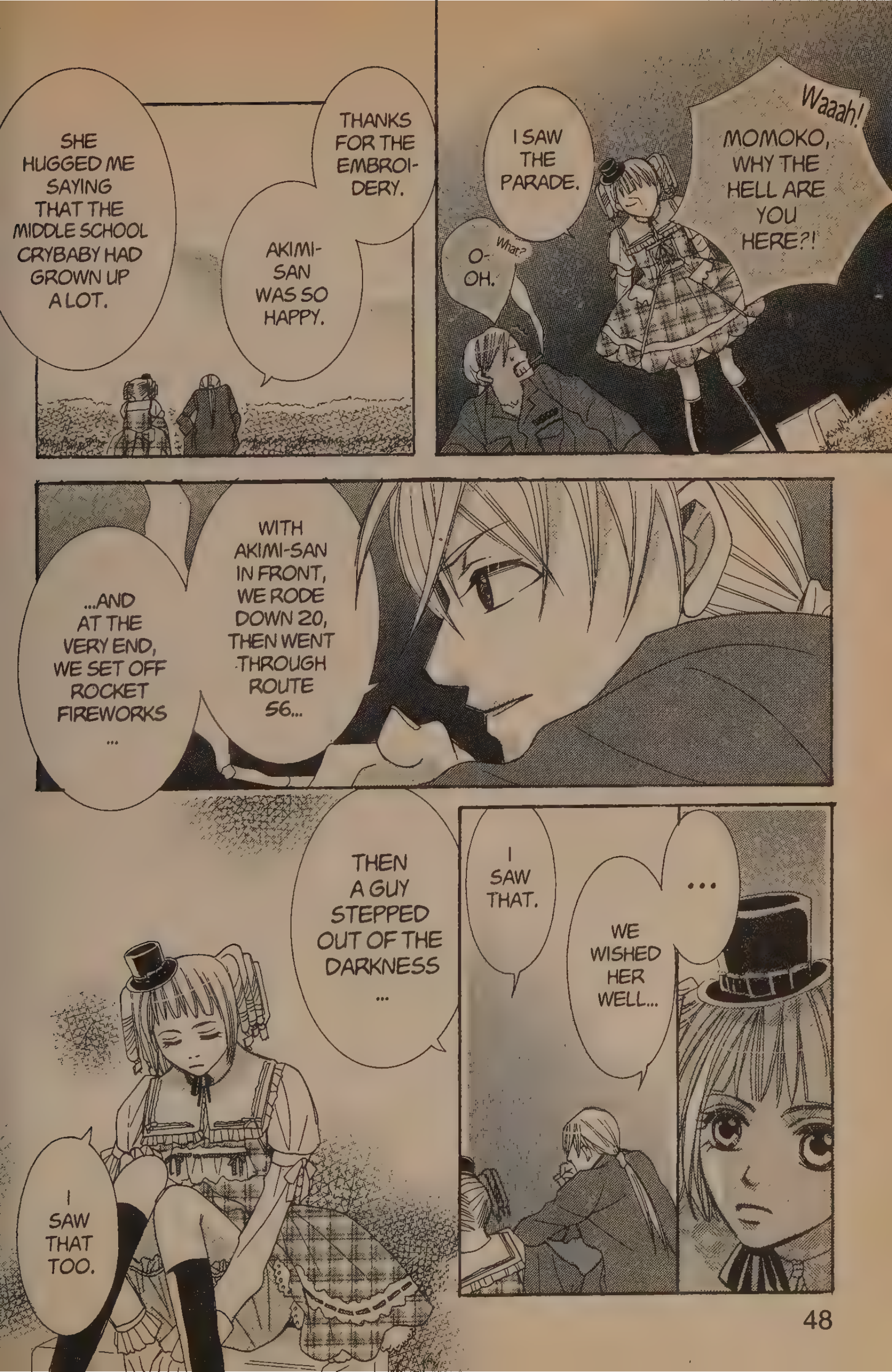

ICHIGO IS *NOT* A FRIEND.
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
MY WOMAN CALLED ME HERE.
HUH?
MY WOMAN'S RETIRING FROM THE BIKER GANG...
...SO SHE WANTS ME TO SAY HI TOO.
WHAT?!
THEY'RE DOING HER RETIREMENT PARADE NOW. OKAY, I'M GOING.
WAIT A MINUTE...
AKIMI'S FIANCÉ IS...

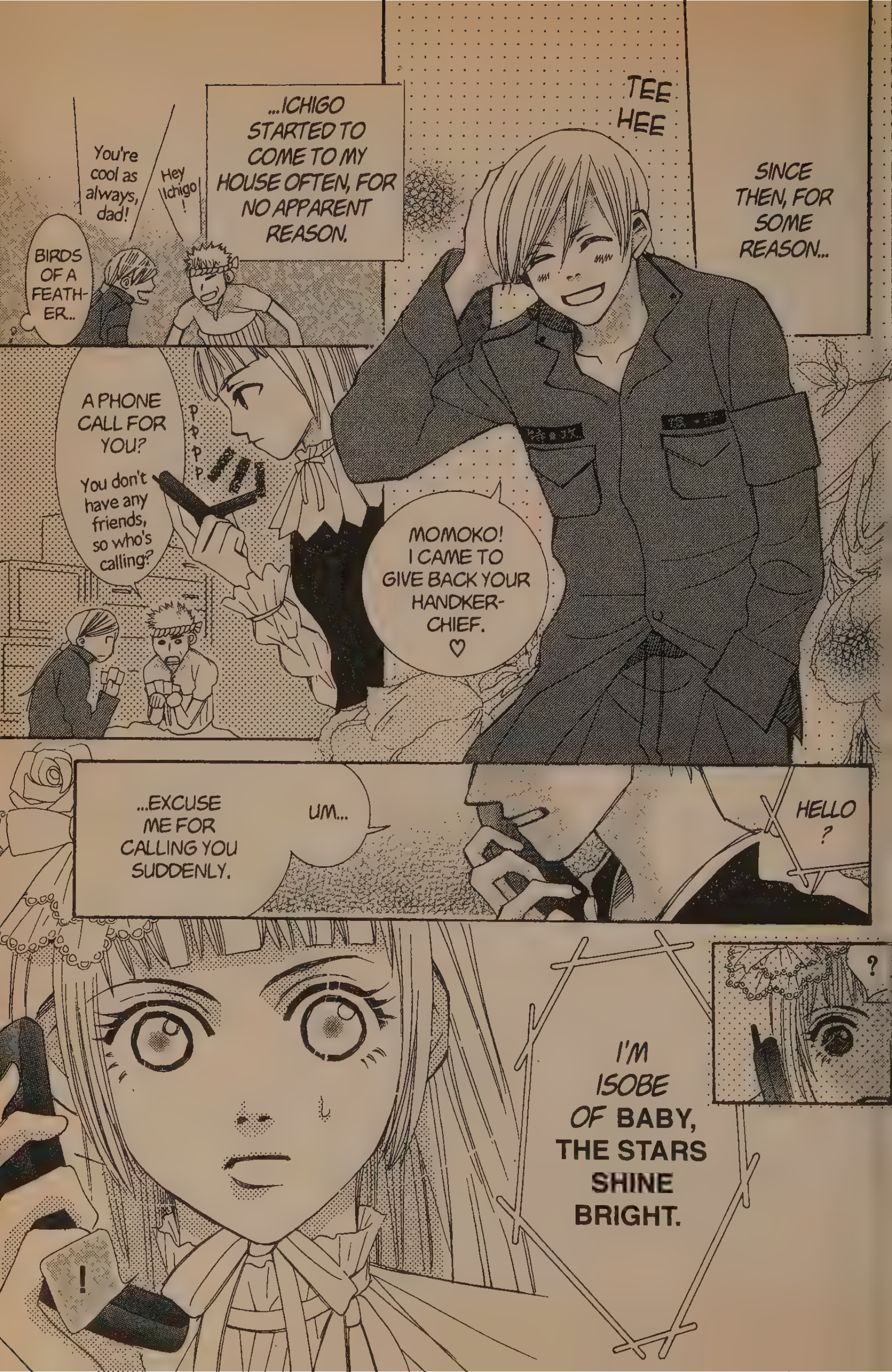

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YANKI...
...BUT WATCHING ICHIGO GOING OFF TO THE RETIREMENT PARADE SO HAPPILY...
...MADE ME WANT TO...
VRRM
VRRM
VRRM
VRRM
...LOOK AT ICHIGO SMILING A LITTLE MORE.
AH
I found the Yanki farm!
THERE'S ICHIGO.
THE WOMAN IN FRONT OF HER MUST BE AKIMI...
HEH
SHE LOOKS SO HAPPY.
HEY.
THE PACHINKO MAN!
What's with the weird nick-name...
YOU'RE ALONE TODAY. WHERE'S YOUR FRIEND?

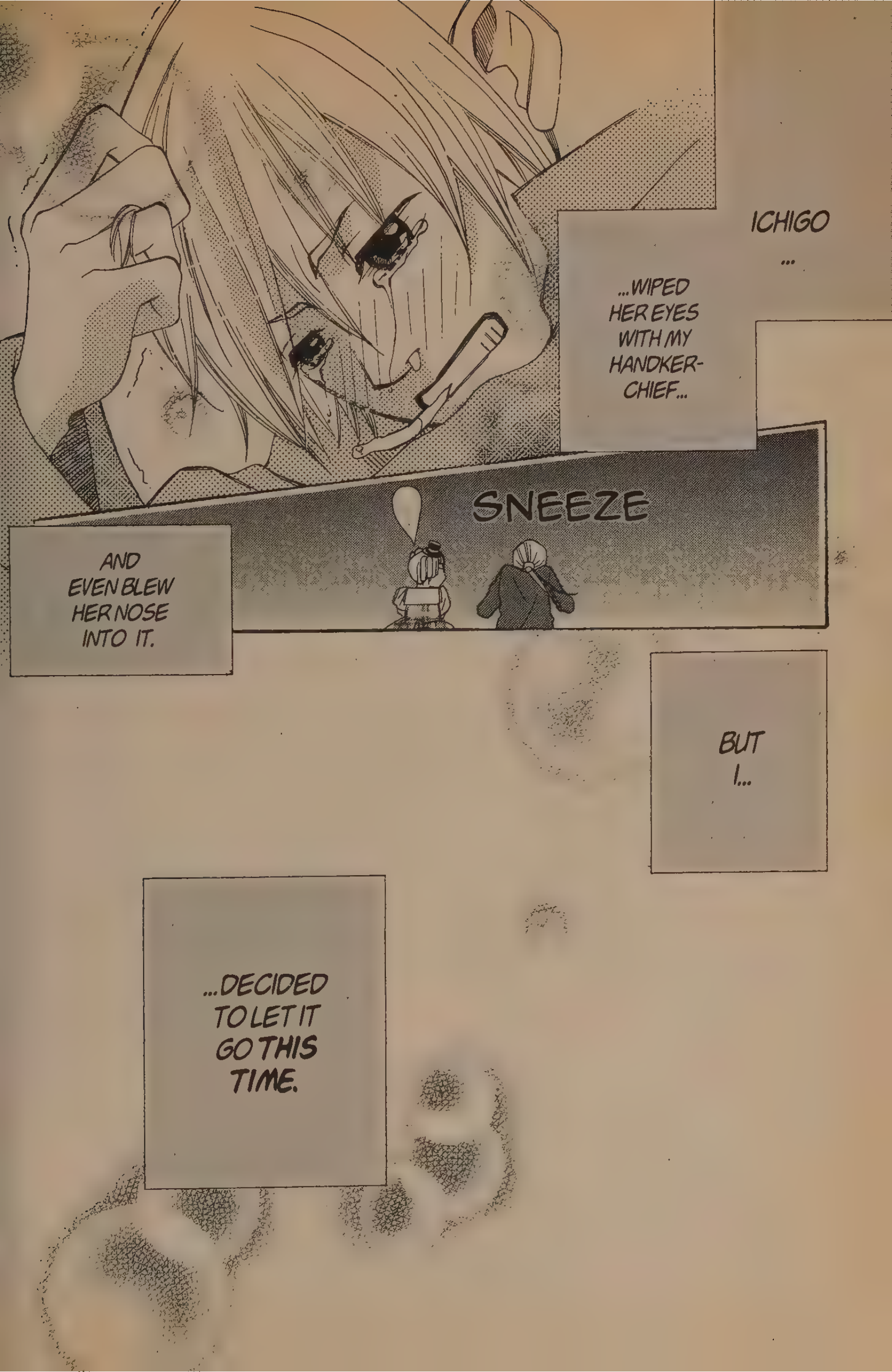

ICHIGO
...
ICHIGO
?

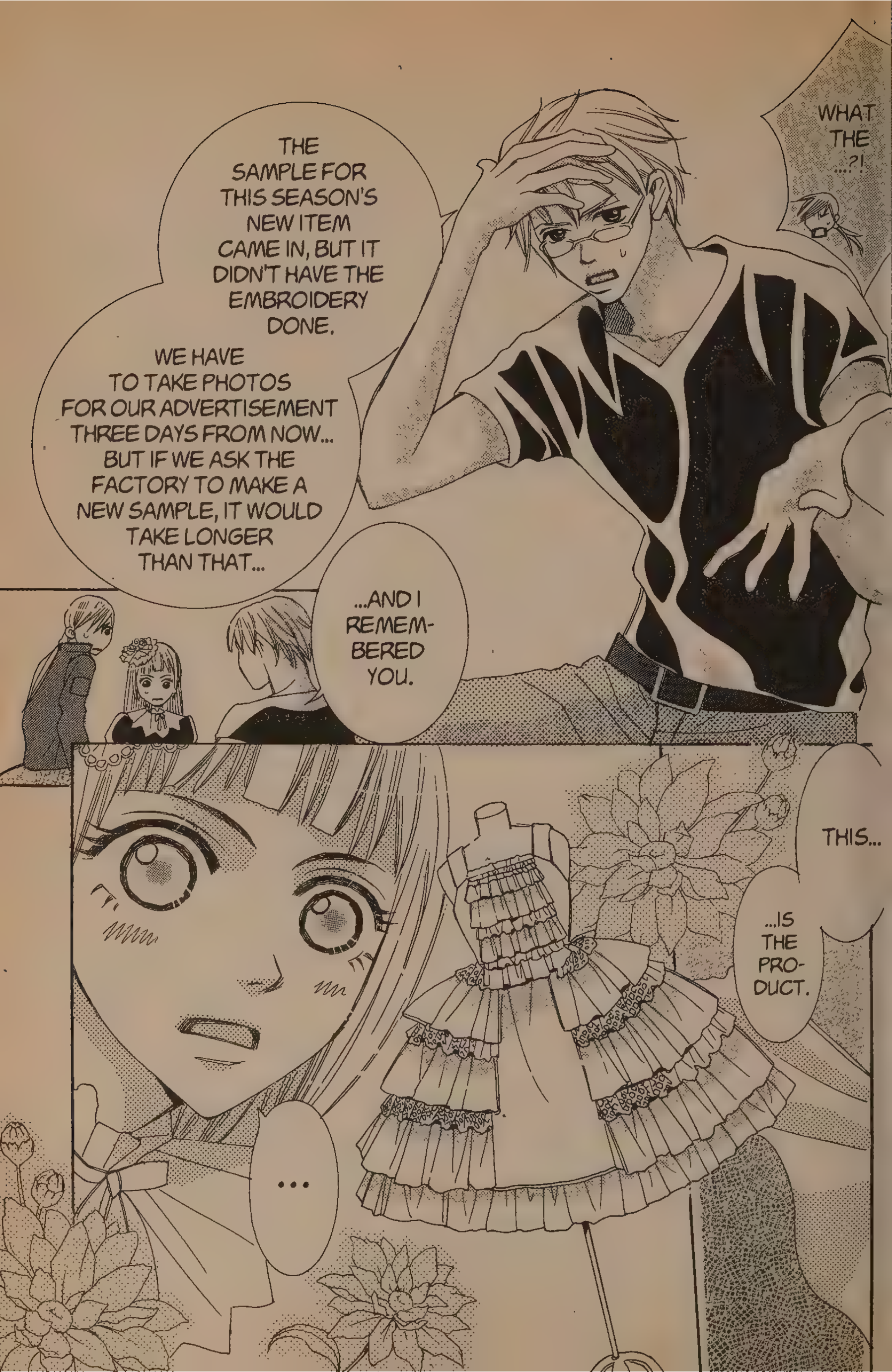

...THIS MAN ?!
YEAH
PAT
FWA
!

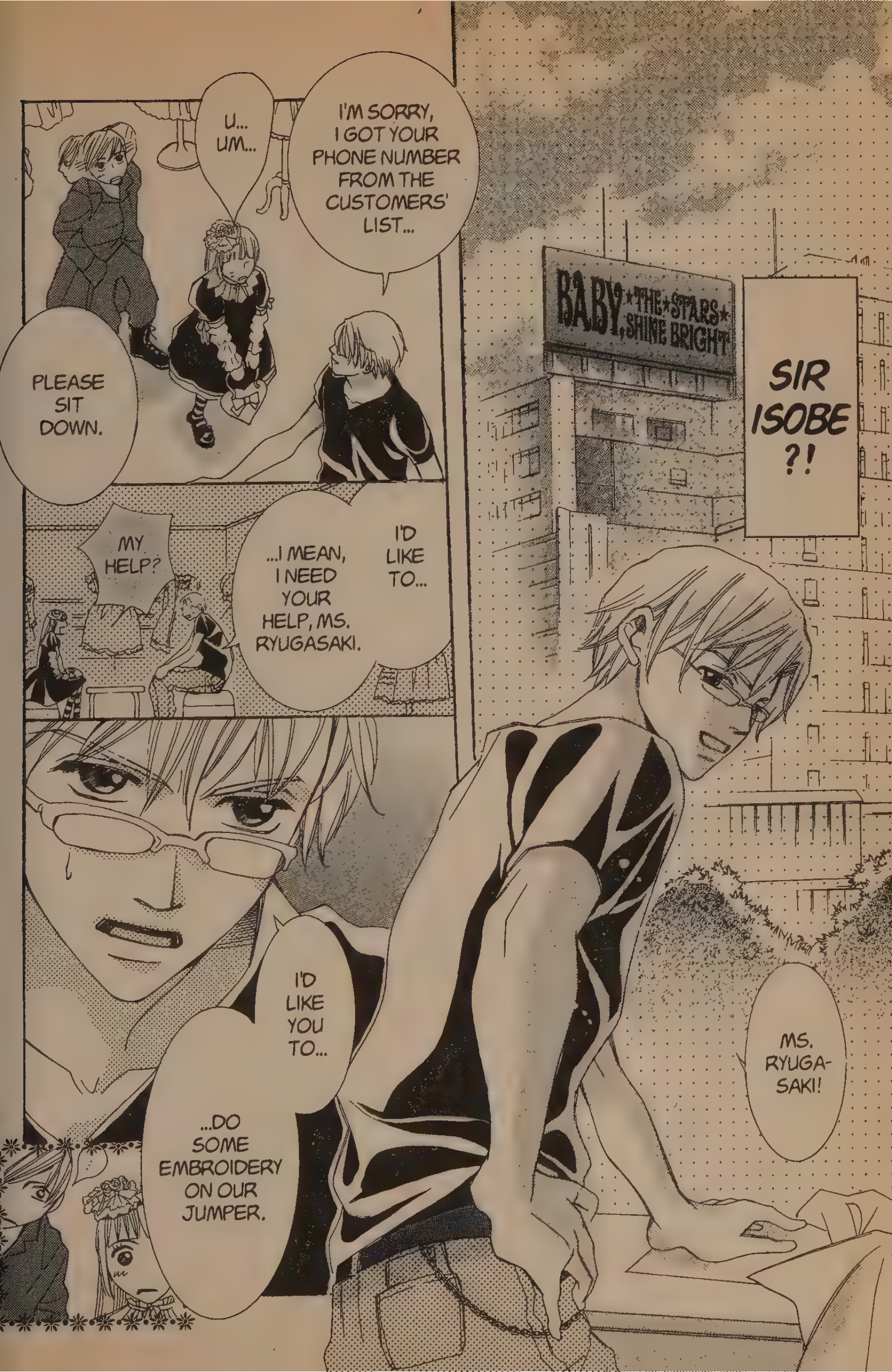

HEY, MOMOKO—
A WOMAN SHOULDN'T CRY IN PUBLIC, RIGHT?
YEAH
...BUT
...THERE'S NO ONE HERE RIGHT NOW.

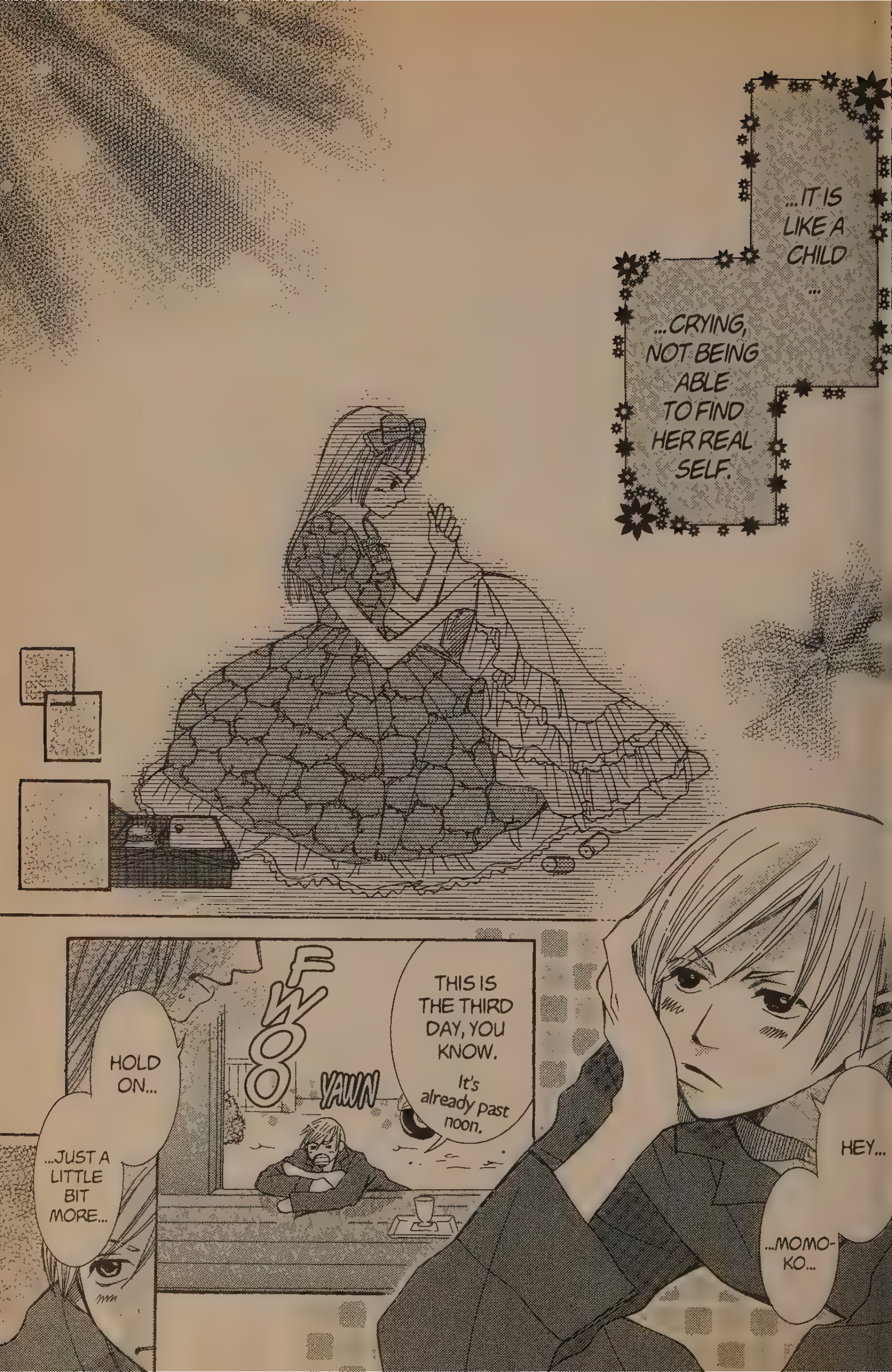

Waaah!
MOMOKO, WHY THE HELL ARE YOU HERE?!
I SAW THE PARADE.
What?
O-OH.
THANKS FOR THE EMBROIDERY.
AKIMI-SAN WAS SO HAPPY.
SHE HUGGED ME SAYING THAT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CRYBABY HAD GROWN UP A LOT.
WITH AKIMI-SAN IN FRONT, WE RODE DOWN 20, THEN WENT THROUGH ROUTE 56...
...AND AT THE VERY END, WE SET OFF ROCKET FIREWORKS ...
...
WE WISHED HER WELL...
I SAW THAT.
THEN A GUY STEPPED OUT OF THE DARKNESS ...
I SAW THAT TOO.

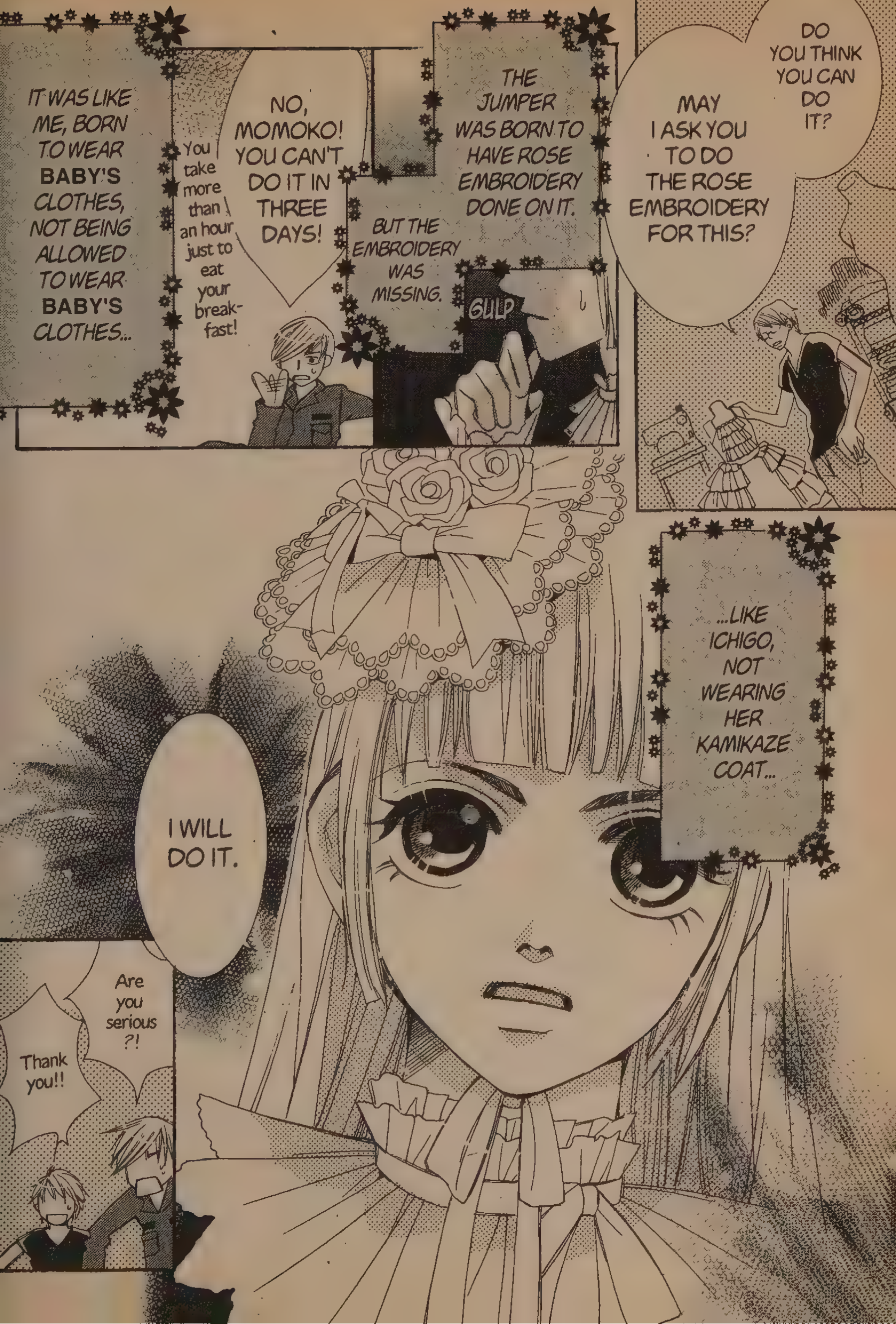

SINCE THEN, FOR SOME REASON...
TEE HEE
...ICHIGO STARTED TO COME TO MY HOUSE OFTEN, FOR NO APPARENT REASON.
Hey Ichigo!
You're cool as always, dad!
BIRDS OF A FEATHER...
MOMOKO! I CAME TO GIVE BACK YOUR HANDKERCHIEF. ♡
PPPP
A PHONE CALL FOR YOU?
You don't have any friends, so who's calling?
HELLO?
UM...
...EXCUSE ME FOR CALLING YOU SUDDENLY.
?
I'M ISOBE OF BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT.
!

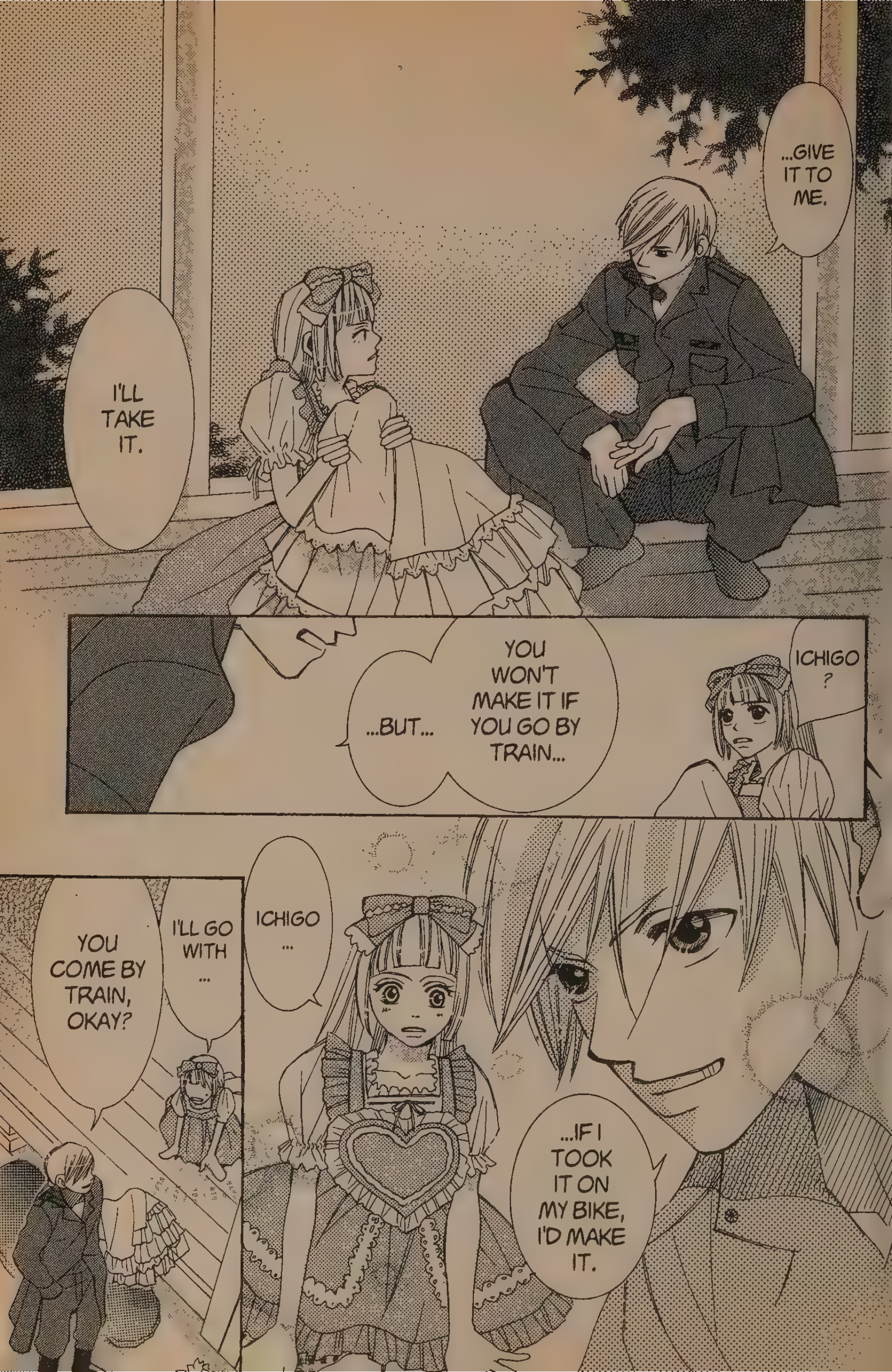

ICHIGO ...
...WIPED HER EYES WITH MY HANDKERCHIEF...
SNEEZE
AND EVEN BLEW HER NOSE INTO IT.
BUT I...
...DECIDED TO LET IT GO THIS TIME.

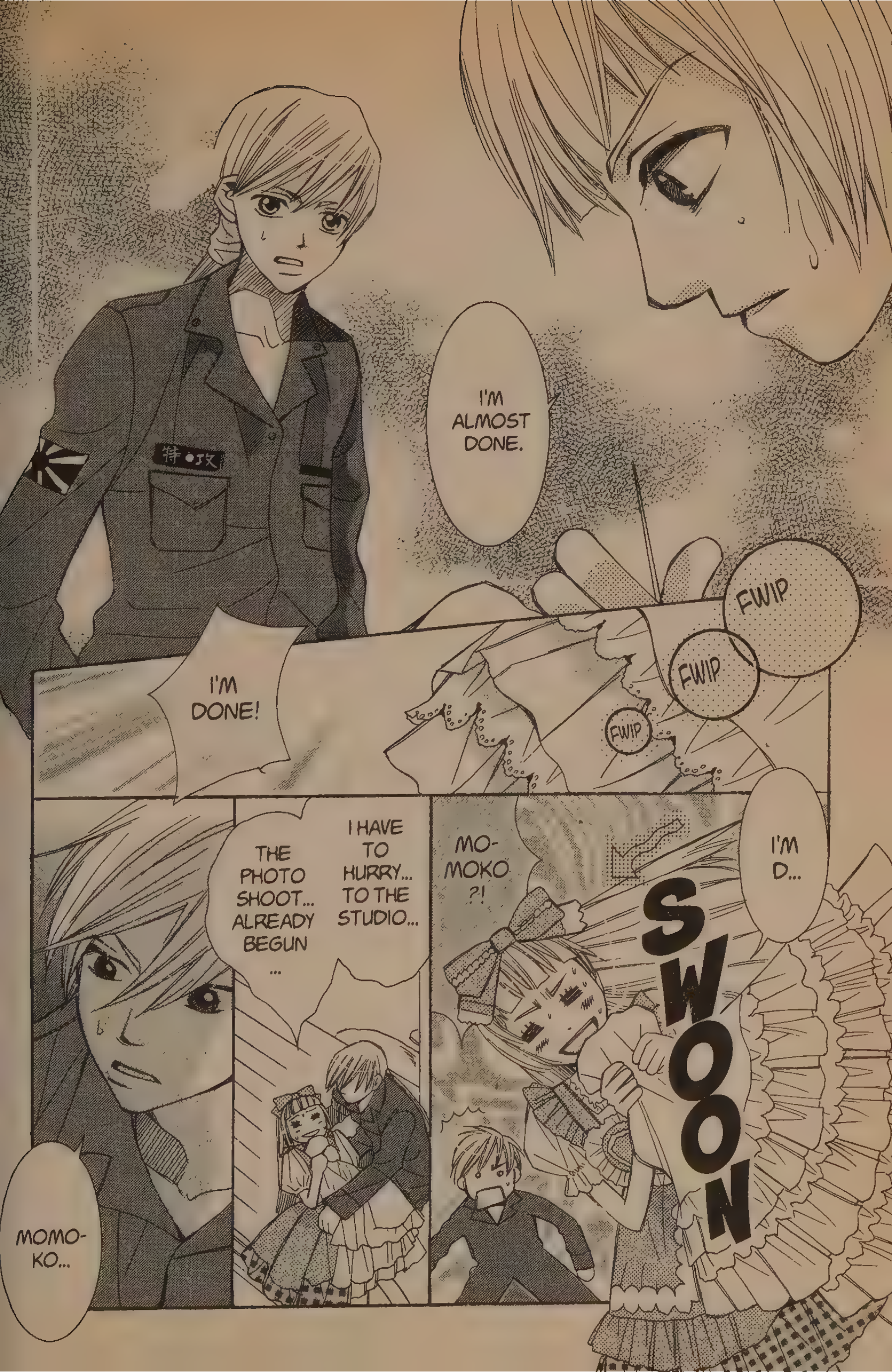

WHAT THE ...?!
THE SAMPLE FOR THIS SEASON'S NEW ITEM CAME IN, BUT IT DIDN'T HAVE THE EMBROIDERY DONE.
WE HAVE TO TAKE PHOTOS FOR OUR ADVERTISEMENT THREE DAYS FROM NOW... BUT IF WE ASK THE FACTORY TO MAKE A NEW SAMPLE, IT WOULD TAKE LONGER THAN THAT...
...AND I REMEMBERED YOU.
THIS...
...IS THE PRODUCT.
...

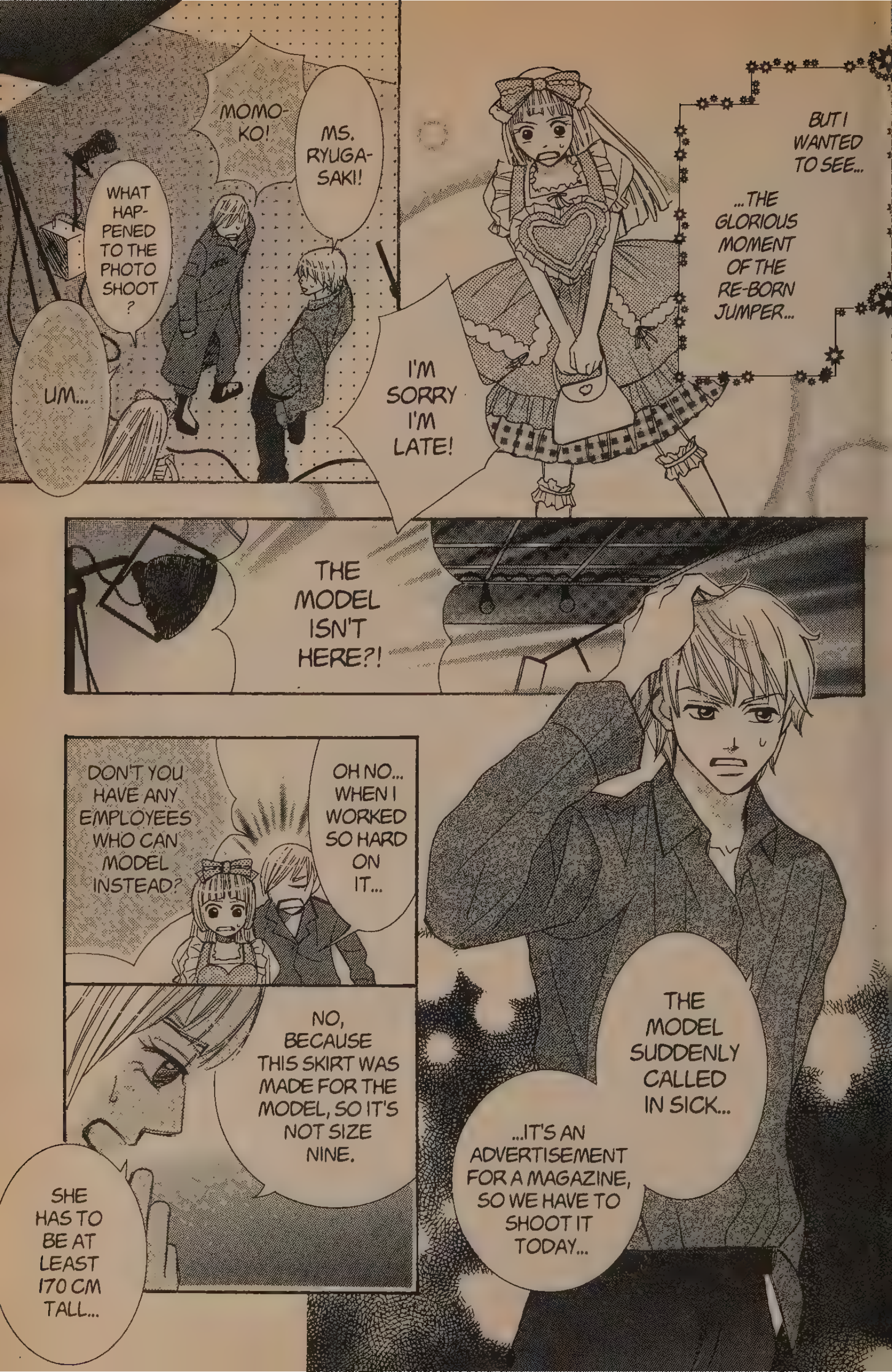

BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT
SIR ISOBE ?!
MS. RYUGASAKI!
I'M SORRY, I GOT YOUR PHONE NUMBER FROM THE CUSTOMERS' LIST...
U... UM...
PLEASE SIT DOWN.
I'D LIKE TO...
...I MEAN, I NEED YOUR HELP, MS. RYUGASAKI.
MY HELP?
I'D LIKE YOU TO...
...DO SOME EMBROIDERY ON OUR JUMPER.

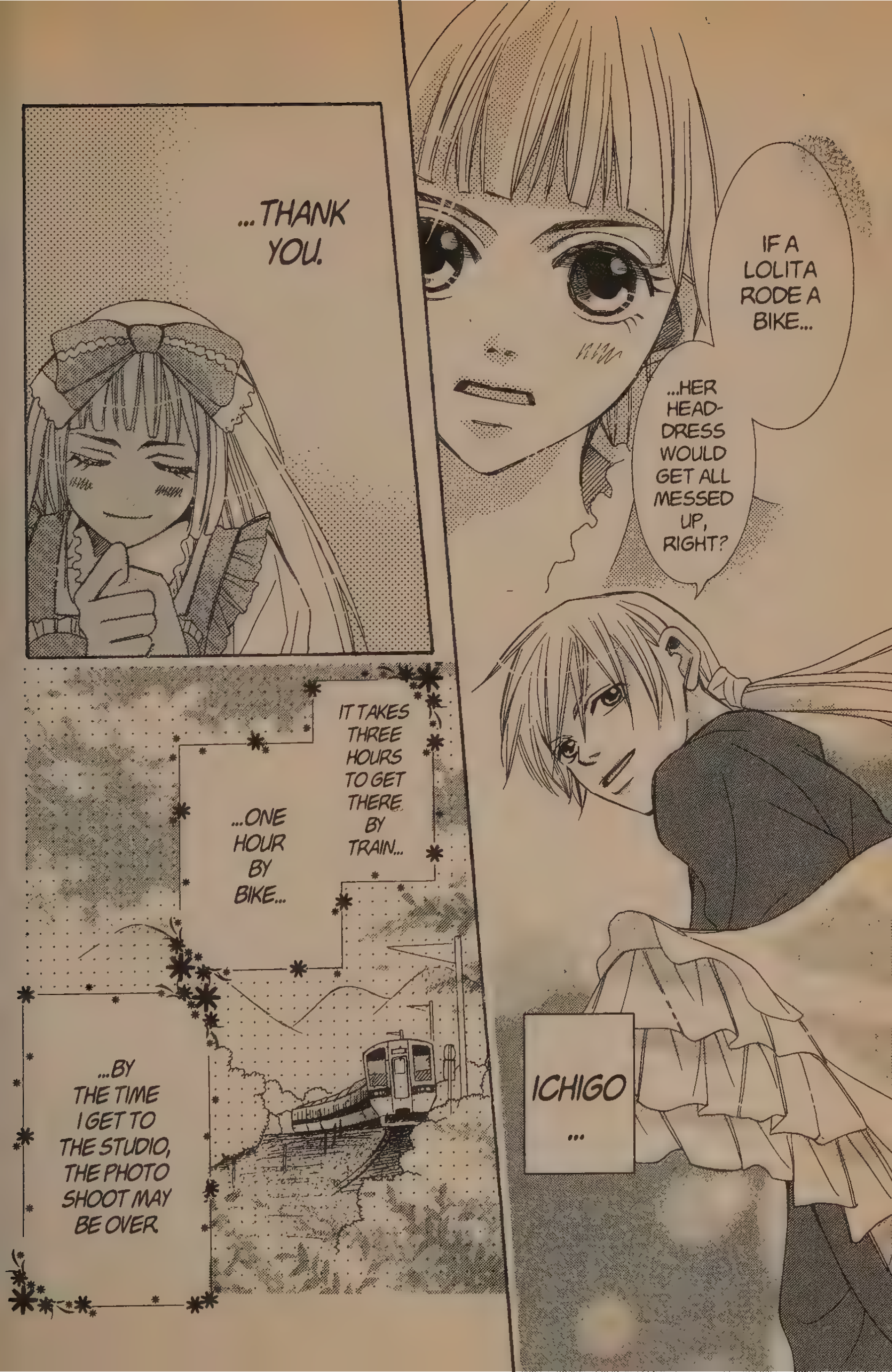

...IT IS LIKE A CHILD...
...CRYING, NOT BEING ABLE TO FIND HER REAL SELF.
HEY...
...MOMOKO...
THIS IS THE THIRD DAY, YOU KNOW.
It's already past noon.
YAWN
FWOO
HOLD ON...
...JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE...

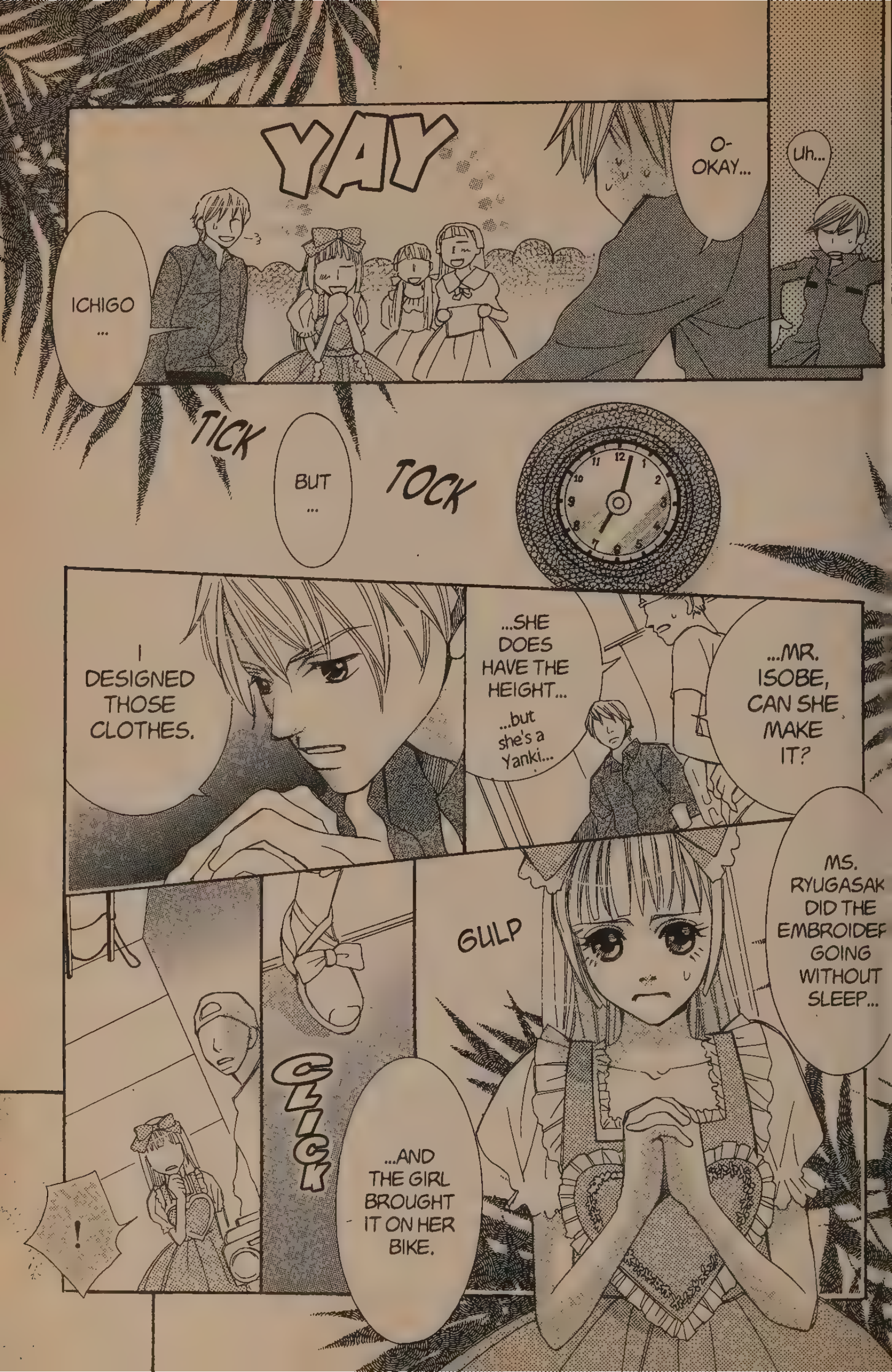

MAY I ASK YOU TO DO THE ROSE EMBROIDERY FOR THIS?
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN DO IT?
THE JUMPER WAS BORN TO HAVE ROSE EMBROIDERY DONE ON IT.
BUT THE EMBROIDERY WAS MISSING.
GULP
NO, MOMOKO! YOU CAN'T DO IT IN THREE DAYS!
You take more than an hour just to eat your breakfast!
IT WAS LIKE ME, BORN TO WEAR BABY'S CLOTHES, NOT BEING ALLOWED TO WEAR BABY'S CLOTHES...
...LIKE ICHIGO, NOT WEARING HER KAMIKAZE COAT...
I WILL DO IT.
Are you serious?!
Thank you!!

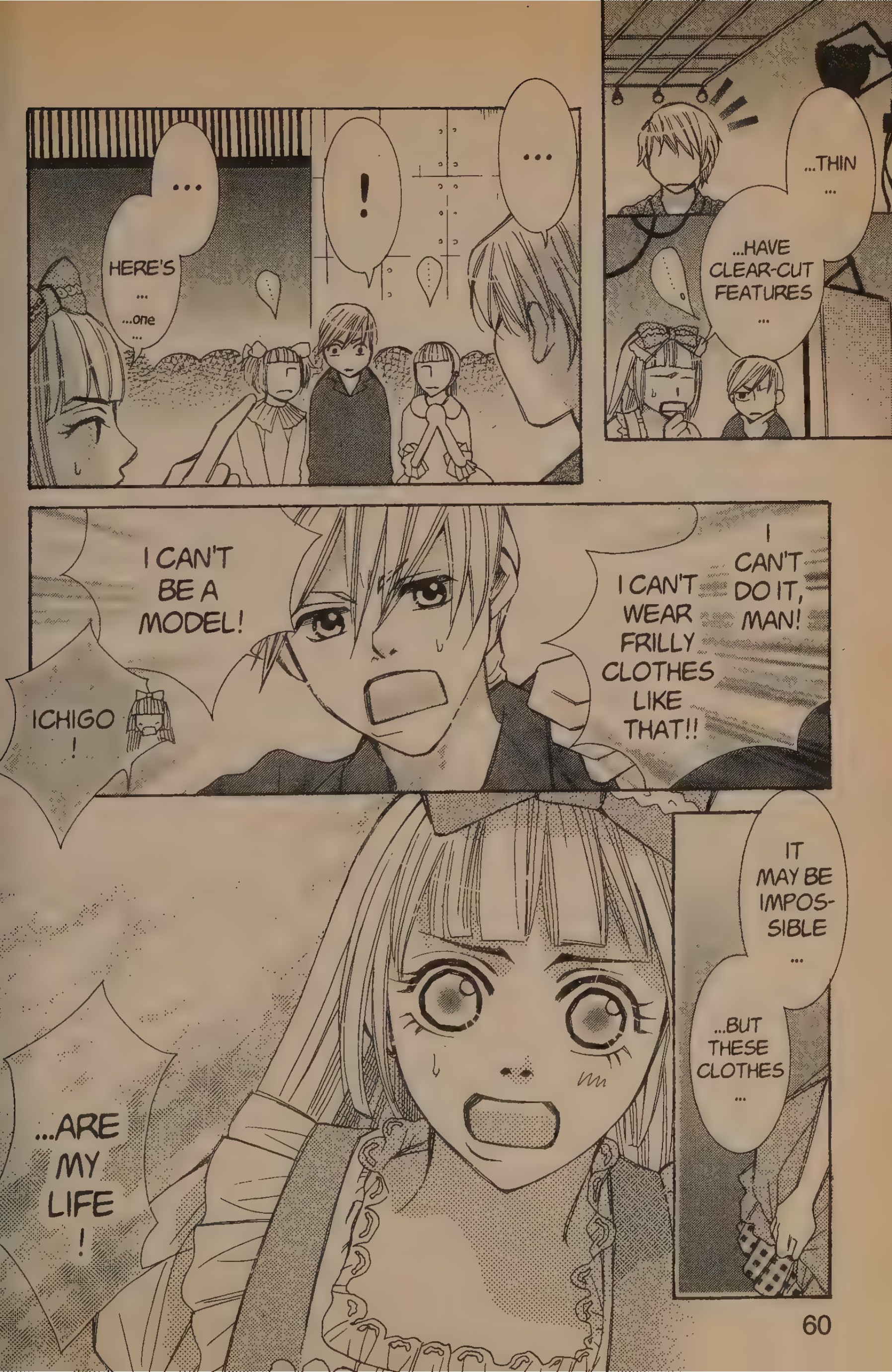

...GIVE IT TO ME.
I'LL TAKE IT.
ICHIGO?
YOU WON'T MAKE IT IF YOU GO BY TRAIN...
...BUT...
...IF I TOOK IT ON MY BIKE, I'D MAKE IT.
ICHIGO...
I'LL GO WITH...
YOU COME BY TRAIN, OKAY?

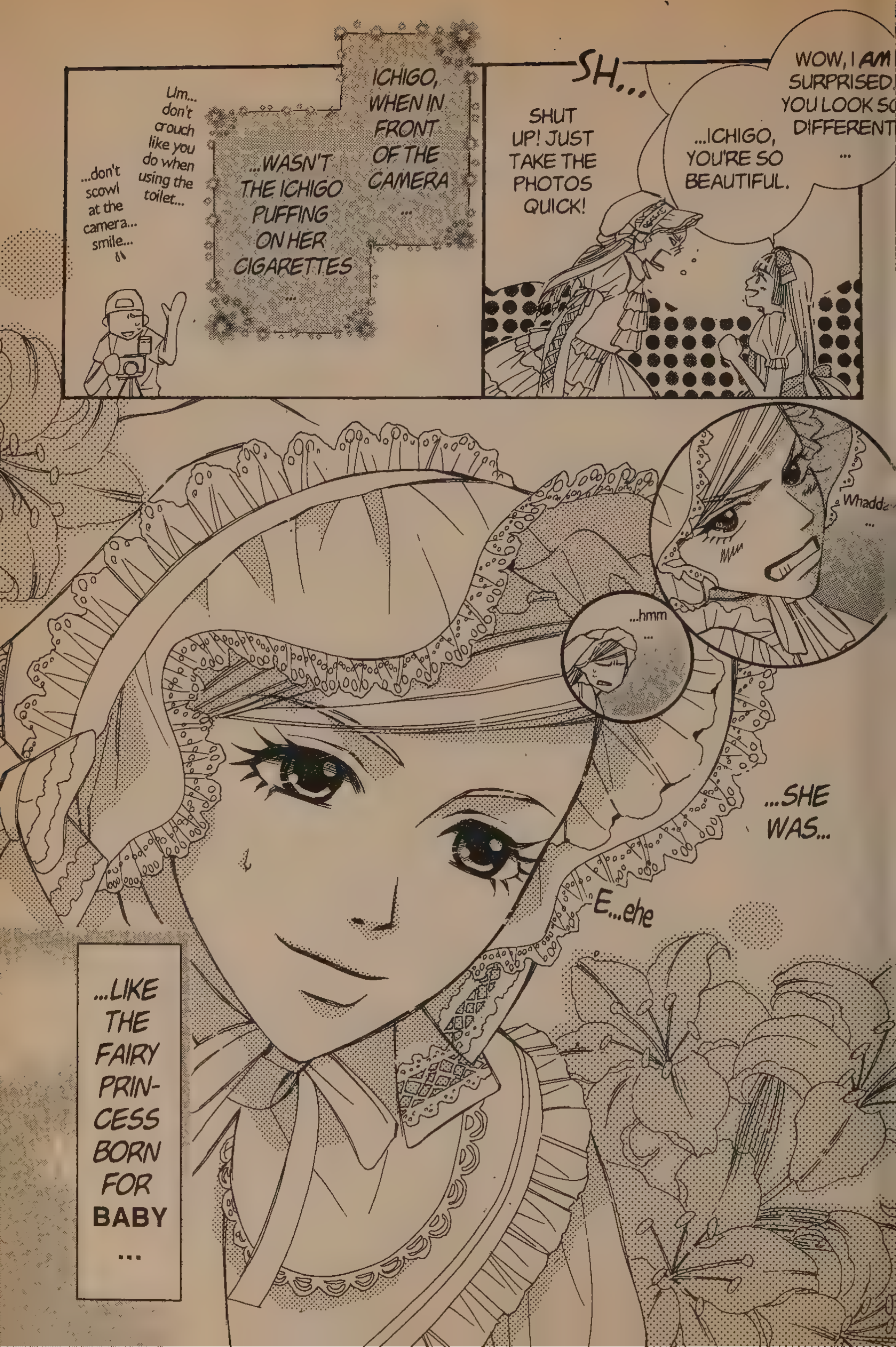

I'M ALMOST DONE.
特•攻
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
I'M DONE!
I'M D...
SWOON
MO-MOKO?!
I HAVE TO HURRY... TO THE STUDIO...
THE PHOTO SHOOT... ALREADY BEGUN ...
MOMO-KO...

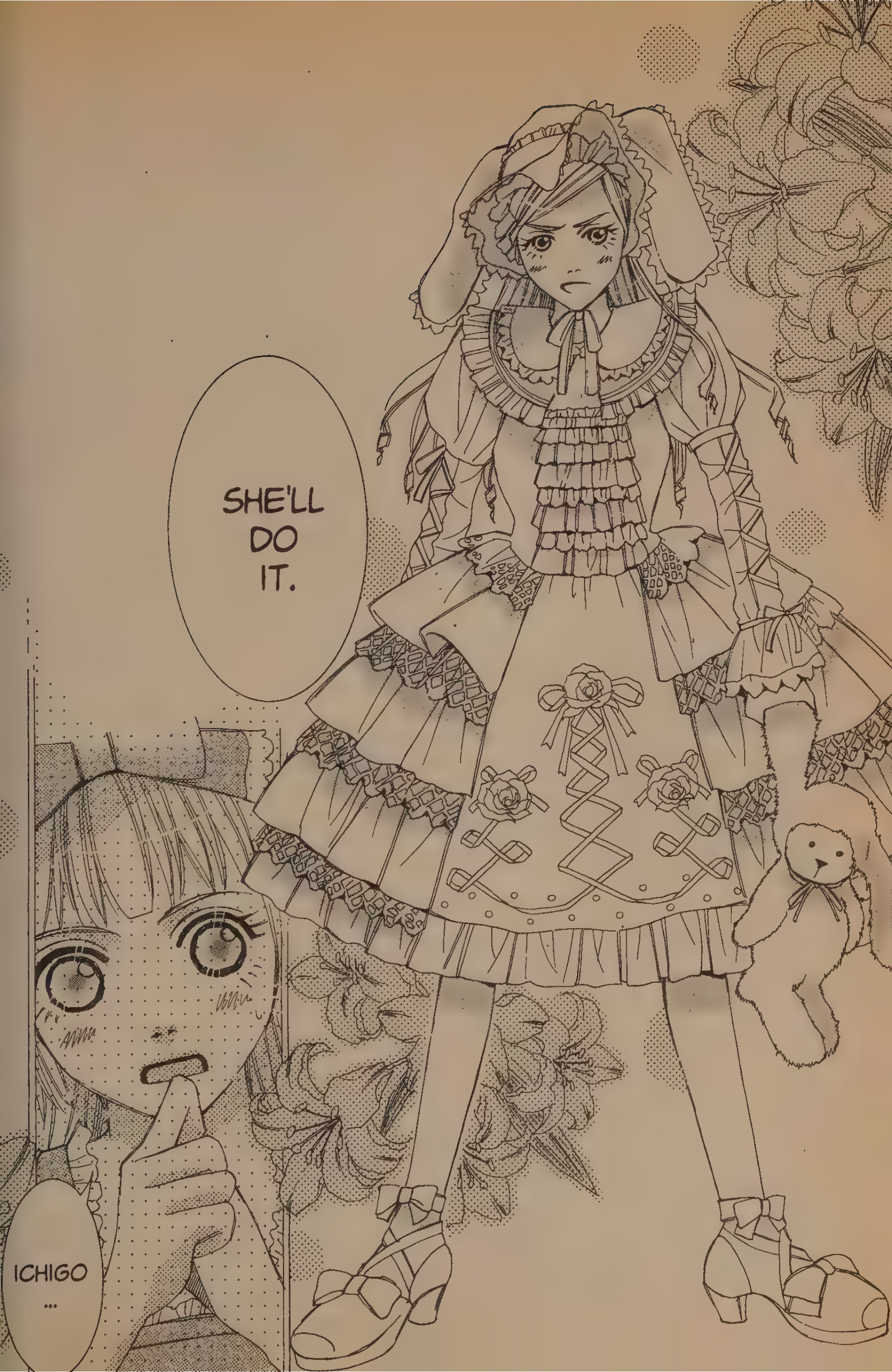

BUT I WANTED TO SEE...
...THE GLORIOUS MOMENT OF THE RE-BORN JUMPER...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE!
MS. RYUGASAKI!
MOMOKO!
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PHOTO SHOOT?
UM...
THE MODEL ISN'T HERE?!
THE MODEL SUDDENLY CALLED IN SICK...
...IT'S AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A MAGAZINE, SO WE HAVE TO SHOOT IT TODAY...
OH NO... WHEN I WORKED SO HARD ON IT...
DON'T YOU HAVE ANY EMPLOYEES WHO CAN MODEL INSTEAD?
NO, BECAUSE THIS SKIRT WAS MADE FOR THE MODEL, SO IT'S NOT SIZE NINE.
SHE HAS TO BE AT LEAST 170 CM TALL...

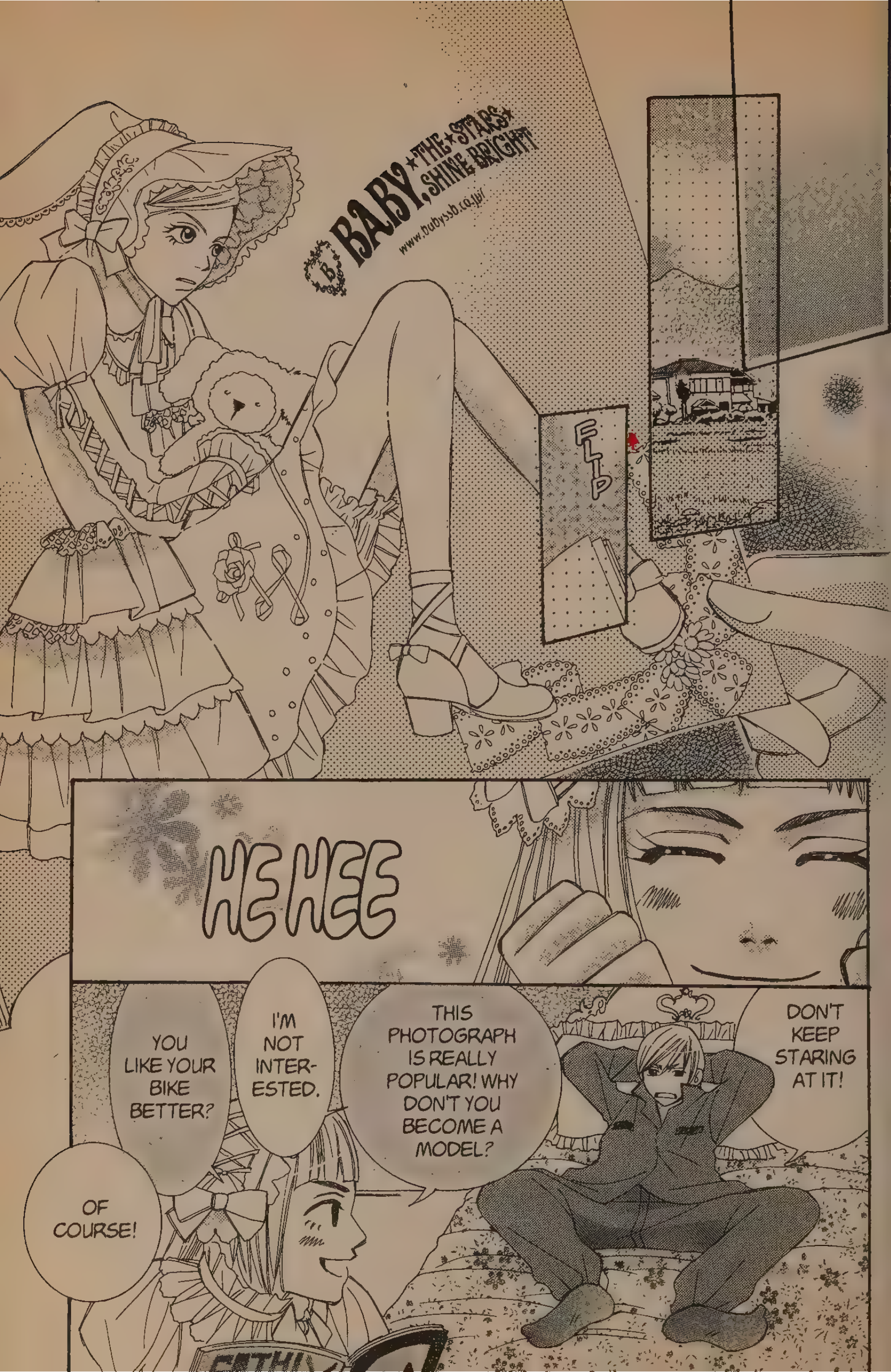

IF A LOLITA RODE A BIKE...
...HER HEADDRESS WOULD GET ALL MESSED UP, RIGHT?
ICHIGO ...
...THANK YOU.
IT TAKES THREE HOURS TO GET THERE BY TRAIN...
...ONE HOUR BY BIKE...
...BY THE TIME I GET TO THE STUDIO, THE PHOTO SHOOT MAY BE OVER.

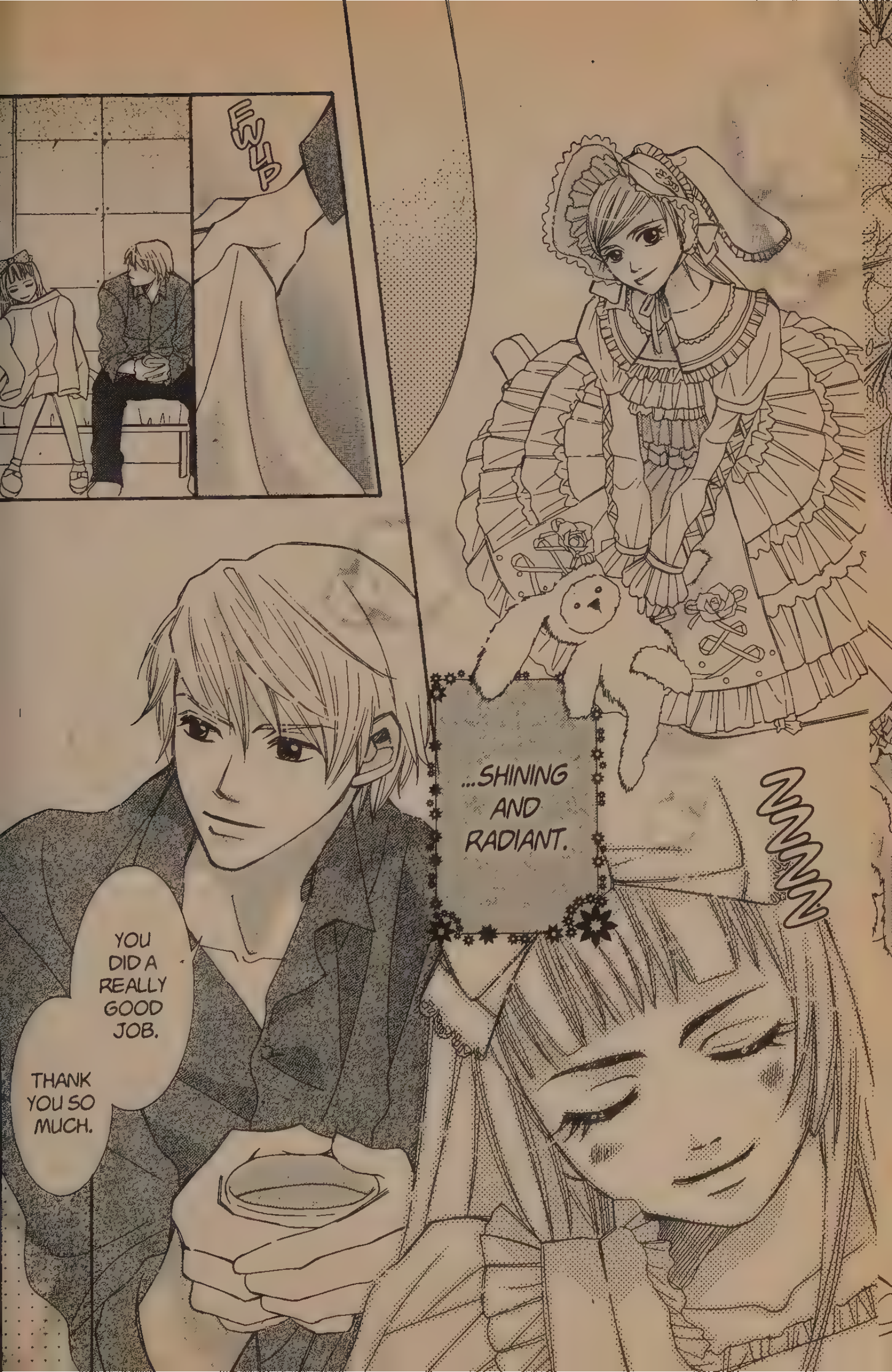

Uh...
O-OKAY...
YAY
ICHIGO ...
TOCK
BUT ...
TICK
...MR. ISOBE, CAN SHE MAKE IT?
...SHE DOES HAVE THE HEIGHT...
...but she's a Yanki...
I DESIGNED THOSE CLOTHES.
MS. RYUGASAK DID THE EMBROIDEF GOING WITHOUT SLEEP...
GULP
...AND THE GIRL BROUGHT IT ON HER BIKE.
CLICK
!

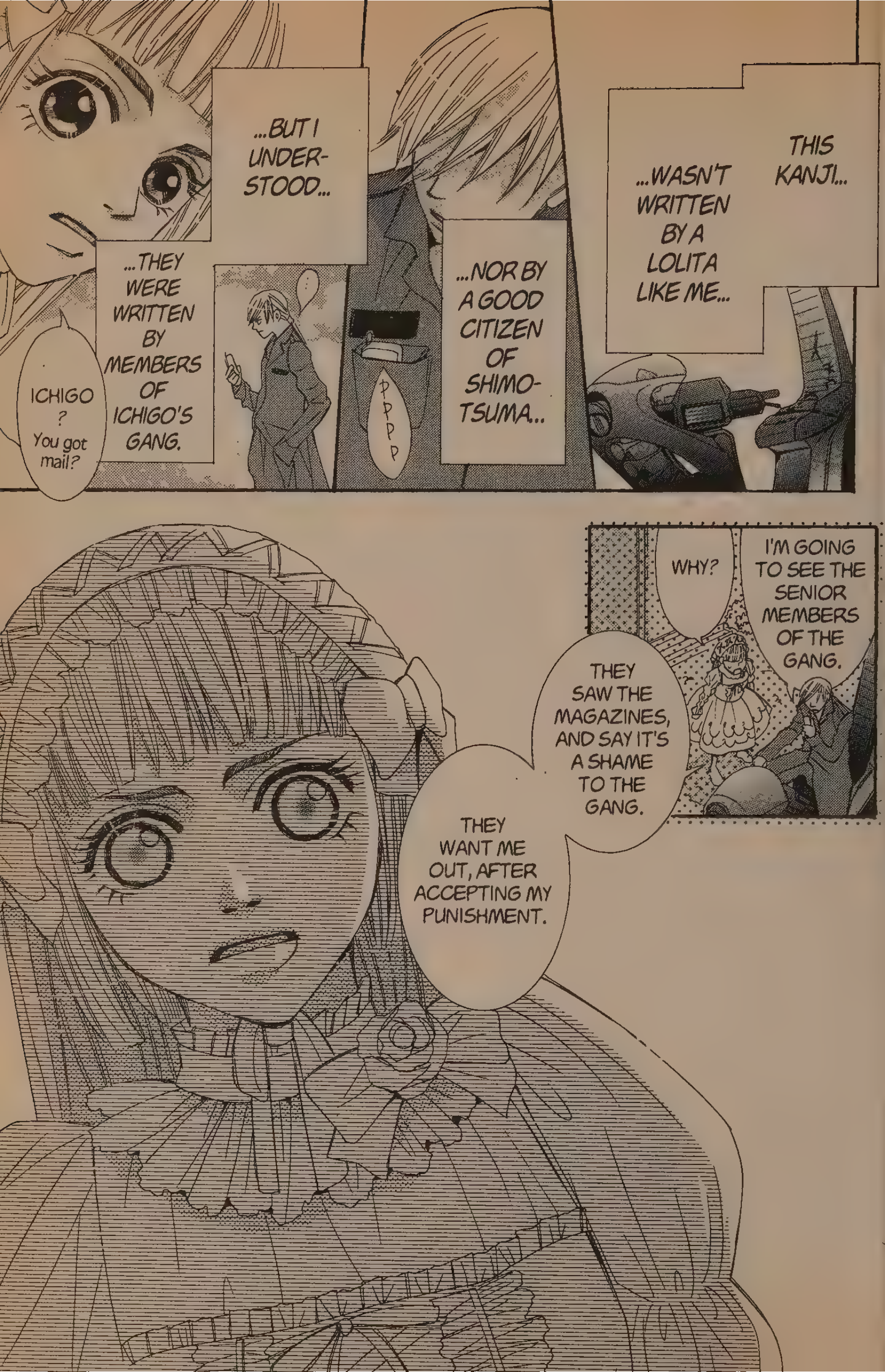

...THIN ...
...HAVE CLEAR-CUT FEATURES ...
...
!
...
HERE'S ... ...one ...
...
I CAN'T DO IT, MAN!
I CAN'T WEAR FRILLY CLOTHES LIKE THAT!!
I CAN'T BE A MODEL!
ICHIGO!
IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE ...
...BUT THESE CLOTHES ...
...ARE MY LIFE!

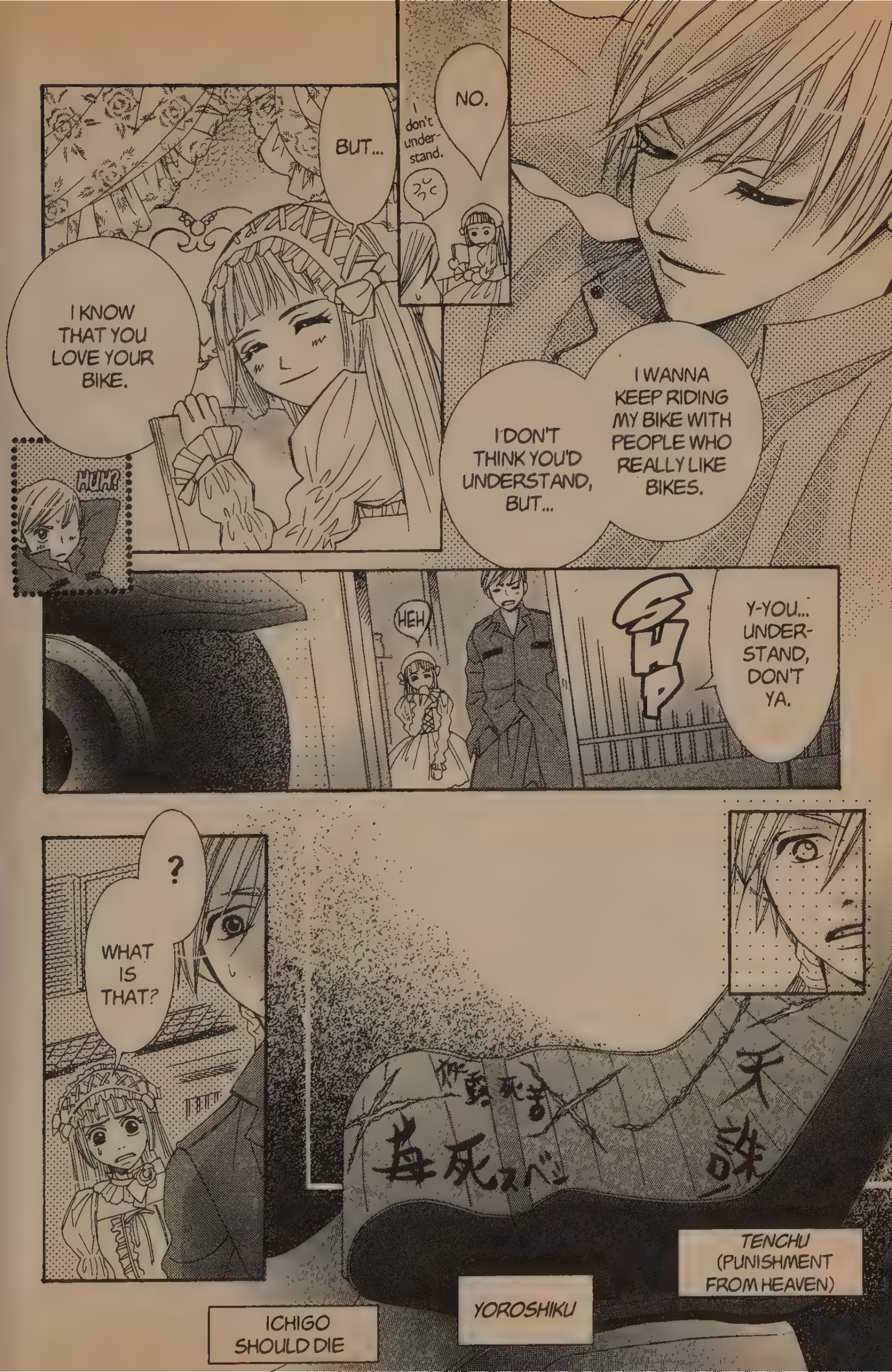

WOW, I AM SURPRISED! YOU LOOK SO DIFFERENT...
...ICHIGO, YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL.
SH...
SHUT UP! JUST TAKE THE PHOTOS QUICK!
Um... don't crouch like you do when using the toilet...
...don't scowl at the camera... smile...
ICHIGO, WHEN IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA...
...WASN'T THE ICHIGO PUFFING ON HER CIGARETTES...
Whadda...
...hmm...
...SHE WAS...
E...ehe
...LIKE THE FAIRY PRINCESS BORN FOR BABY...

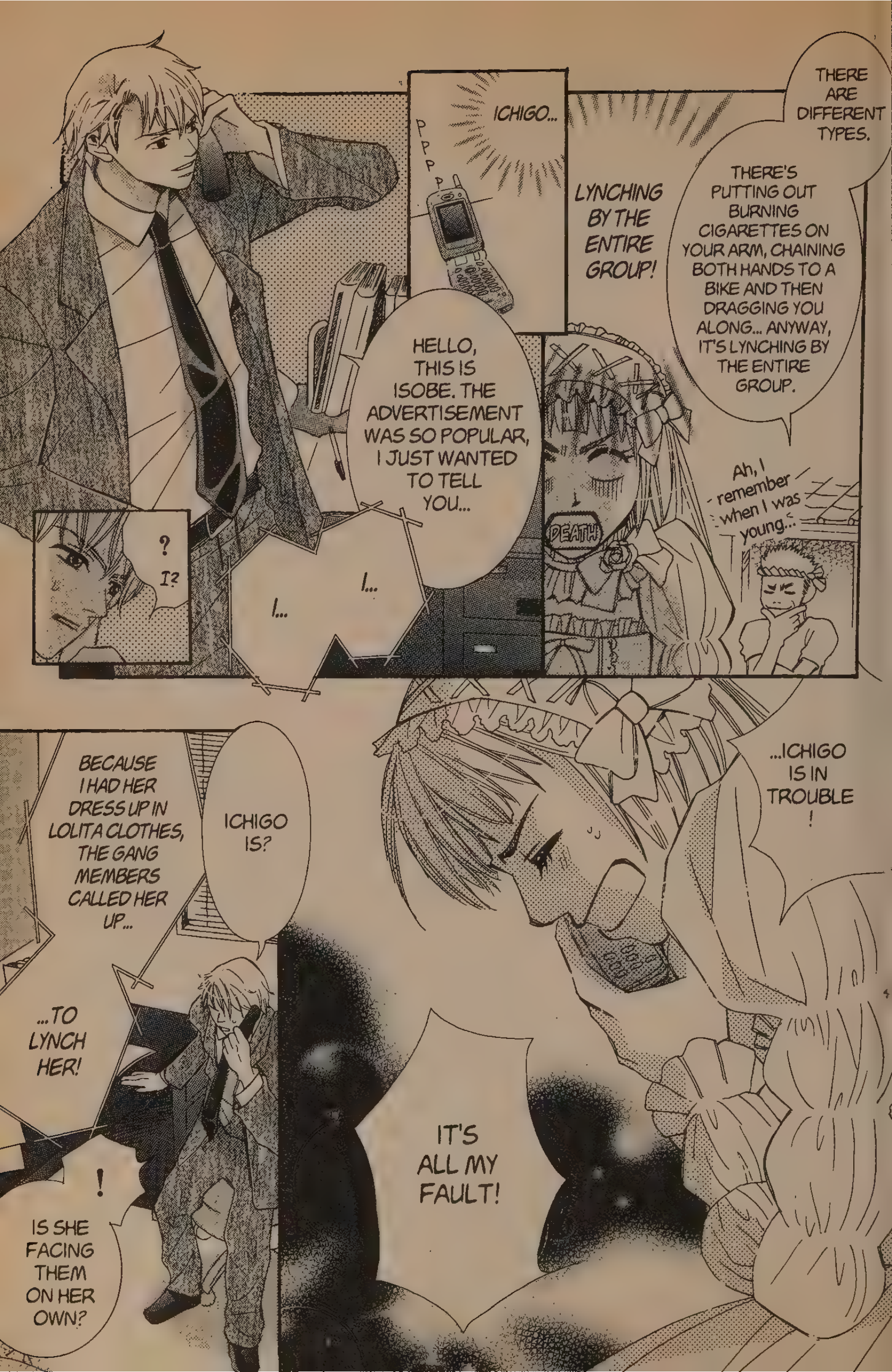

SHE'LL DO IT.
ICHIGO ...

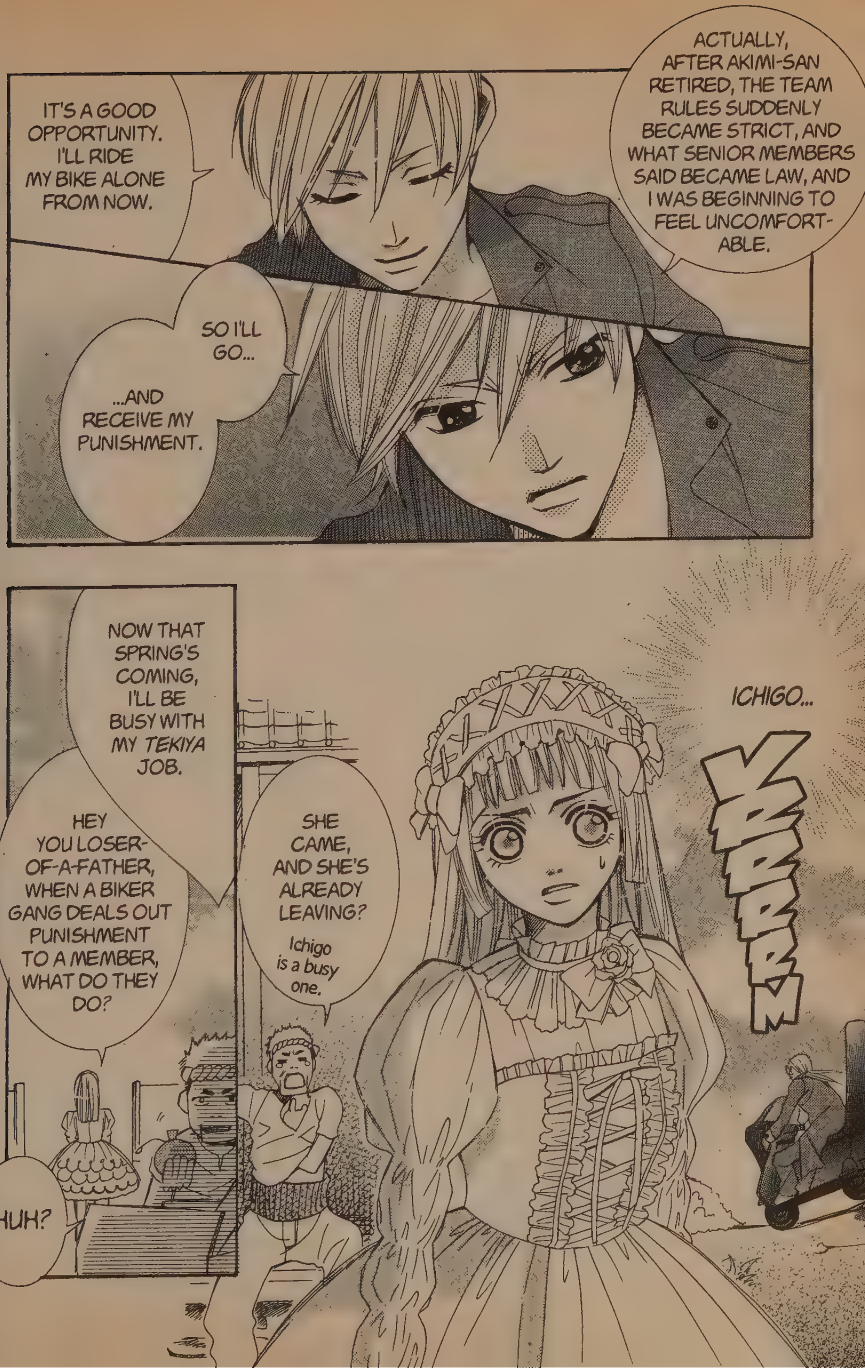

BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT
www.babyssb.co.jp/
FLIP
HE HEE
DON'T KEEP STARING AT IT!
THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS REALLY POPULAR! WHY DON'T YOU BECOME A MODEL?
I'M NOT INTERESTED.
YOU LIKE YOUR BIKE BETTER?
OF COURSE!

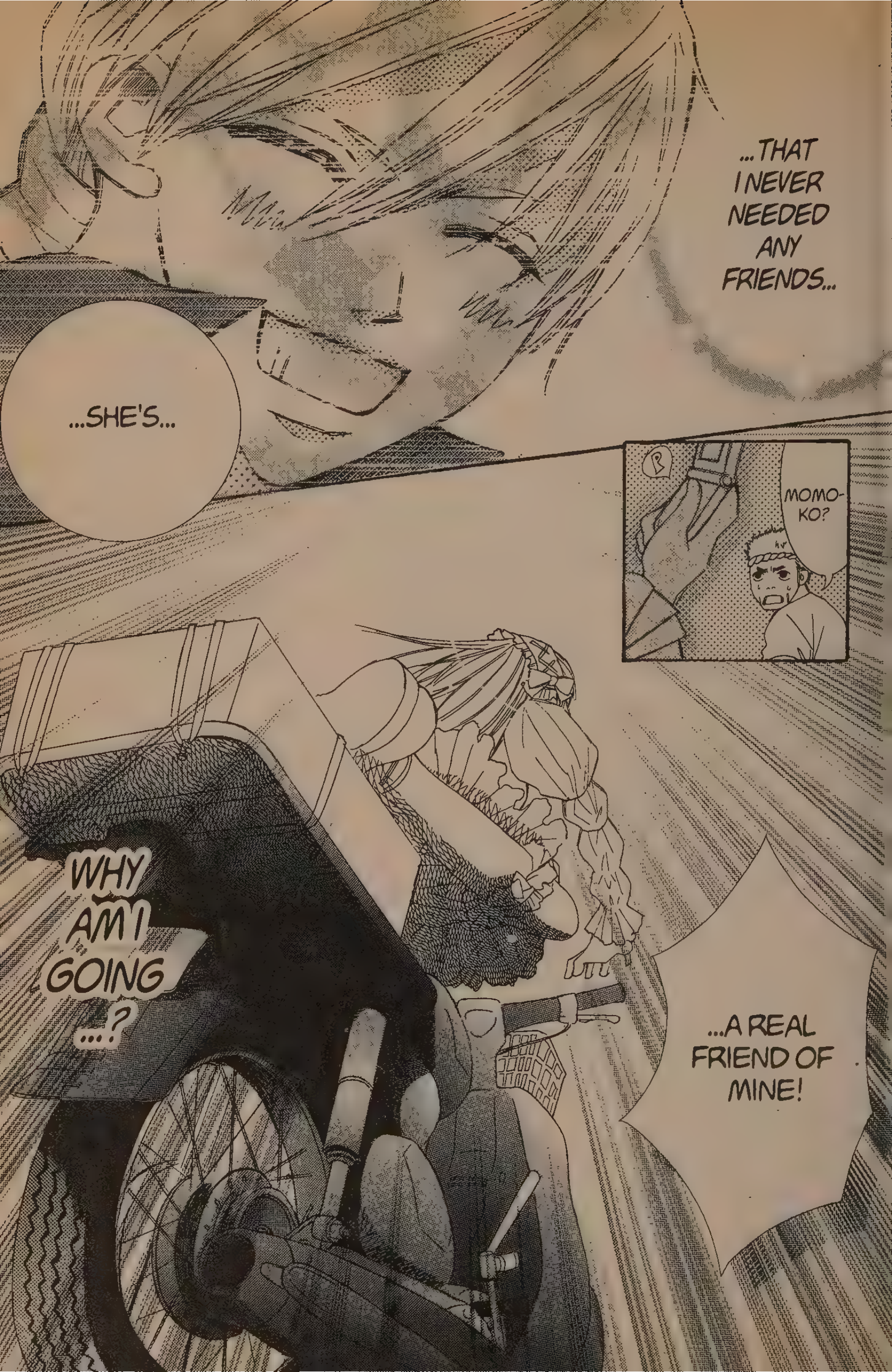

FWUP
...SHINING AND RADIANT.
YOU DID A REALLY GOOD JOB.
THANK YOU SO MUCH.

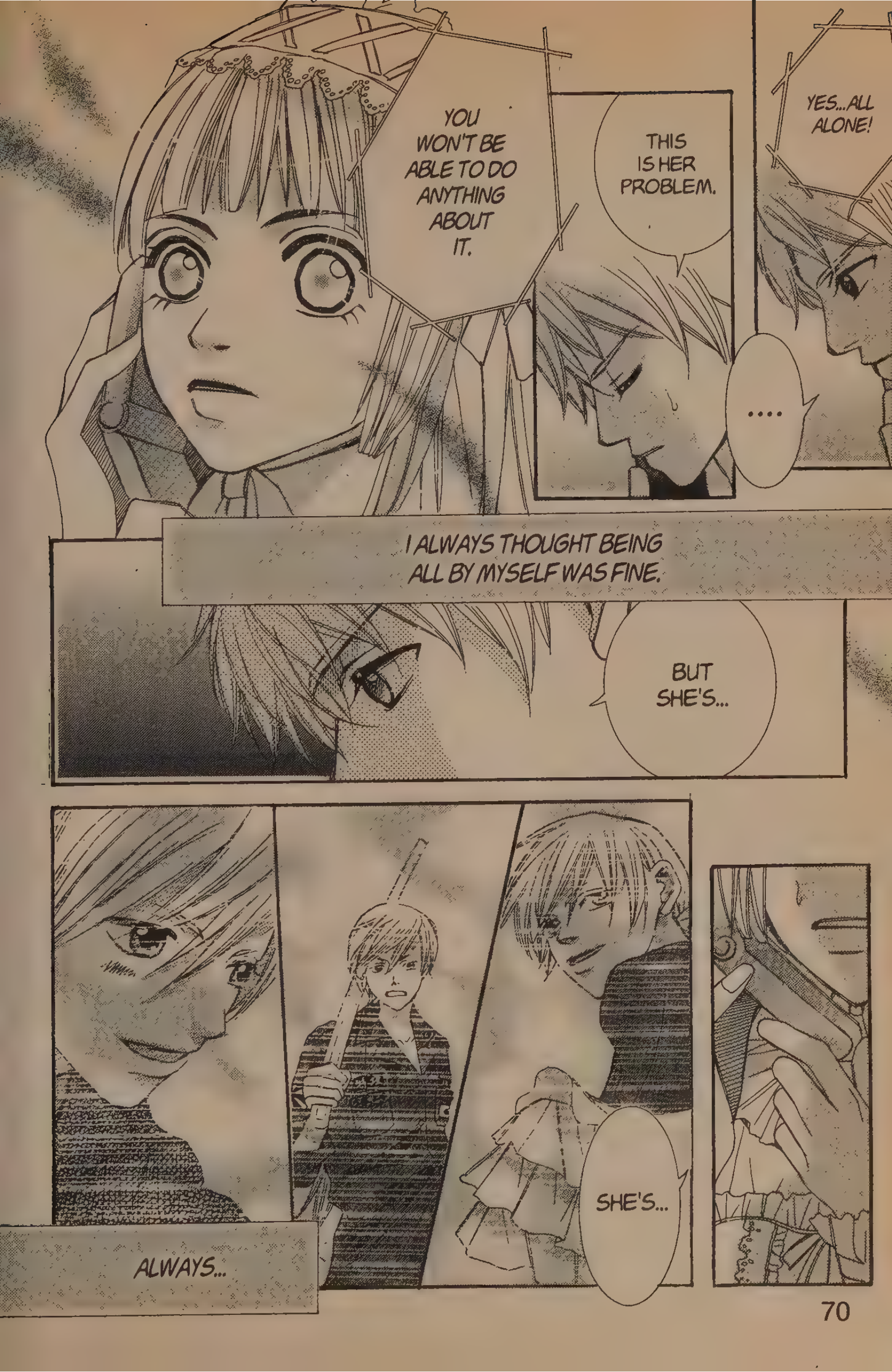

THIS KANJI...
...WASN'T WRITTEN BY A LOLITA LIKE ME...
...NOR BY A GOOD CITIZEN OF SHIMO-TSUMA...
PPPP
...BUT I UNDERSTOOD...
...THEY WERE WRITTEN BY MEMBERS OF ICHIGO'S GANG.
ICHIGO? You got mail?
I'M GOING TO SEE THE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE GANG.
WHY?
THEY SAW THE MAGAZINES, AND SAY IT'S A SHAME TO THE GANG.
THEY WANT ME OUT, AFTER ACCEPTING MY PUNISHMENT.

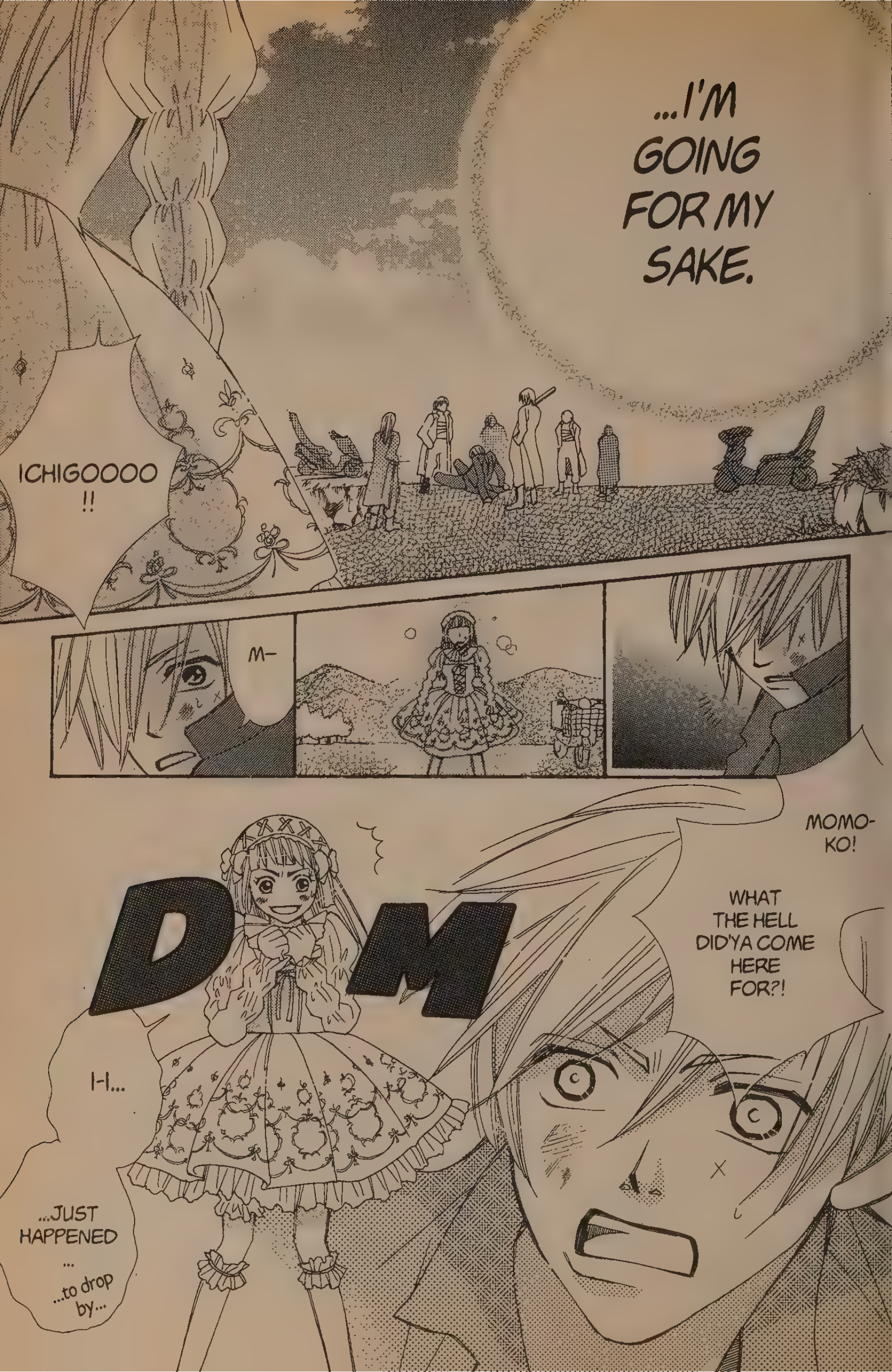

NO.
I don't understand.
BUT...
I KNOW THAT YOU LOVE YOUR BIKE.
HUH?
I WANNA KEEP RIDING MY BIKE WITH PEOPLE WHO REALLY LIKE BIKES.
I DON'T THINK YOU'D UNDERSTAND, BUT...
Y-YOU... UNDERSTAND, DON'T YA.
SHUP
HEH
天誅
TENCHU (PUNISHMENT FROM HEAVEN)
夜露死苦
YOROSHIKU
ICHIGO SHOULD DIE
?
WHAT IS THAT?

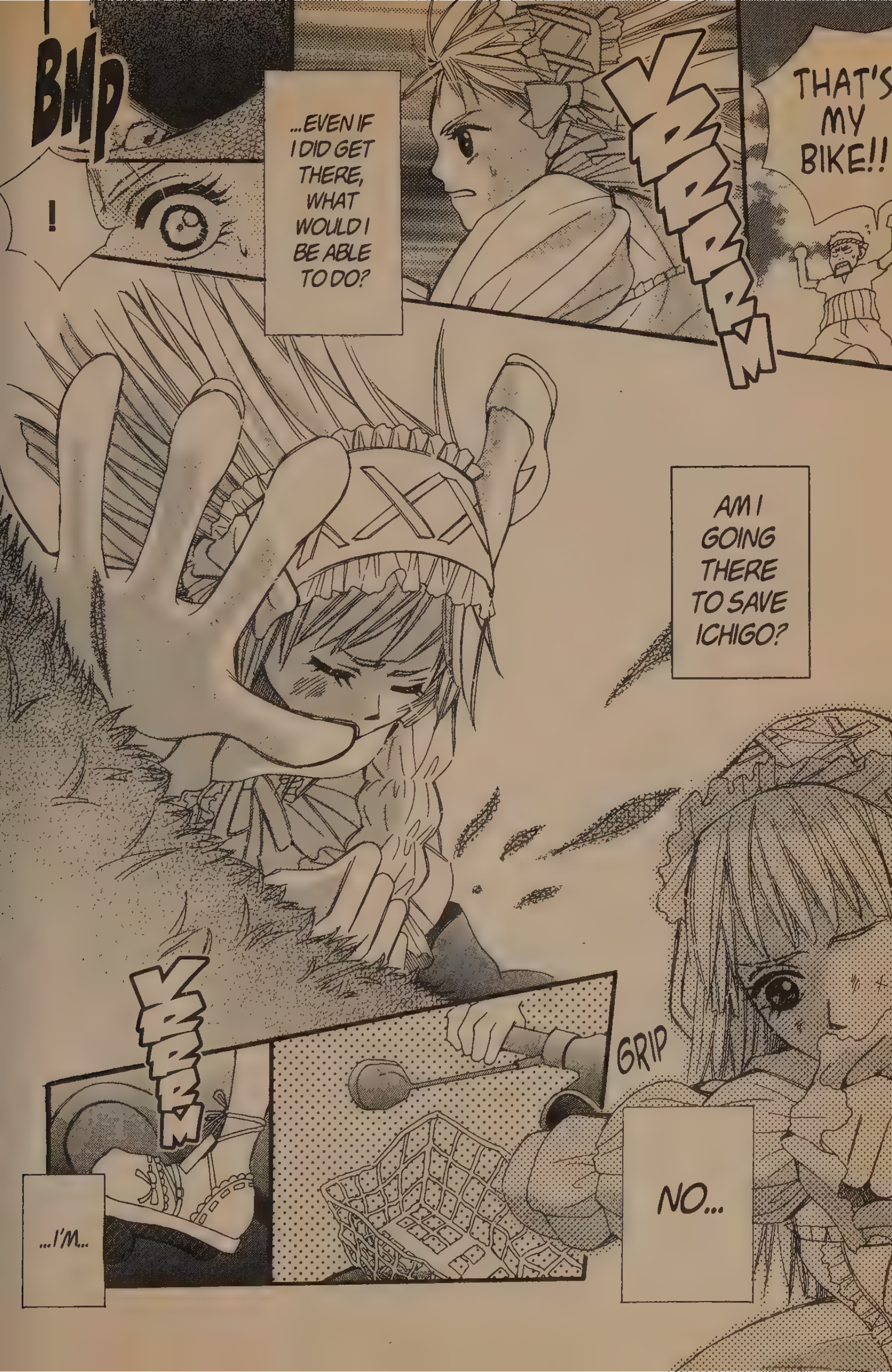

THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES.
THERE'S PUTTING OUT BURNING CIGARETTES ON YOUR ARM, CHAINING BOTH HANDS TO A BIKE AND THEN DRAGGING YOU ALONG... ANYWAY, IT'S LYNCHING BY THE ENTIRE GROUP.
LYNCHING BY THE ENTIRE GROUP!
Ah, I remember when I was young...
DEATH
PPPP
ICHIGO...
HELLO, THIS IS ISOBE. THE ADVERTISEMENT WAS SO POPULAR, I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU...
I...
I...
?
I?
...ICHIGO IS IN TROUBLE!
IT'S ALL MY FAULT!
ICHIGO IS?
BECAUSE I HAD HER DRESS UP IN LOLITA CLOTHES, THE GANG MEMBERS CALLED HER UP...
...TO LYNCH HER!
!
IS SHE FACING THEM ON HER OWN?

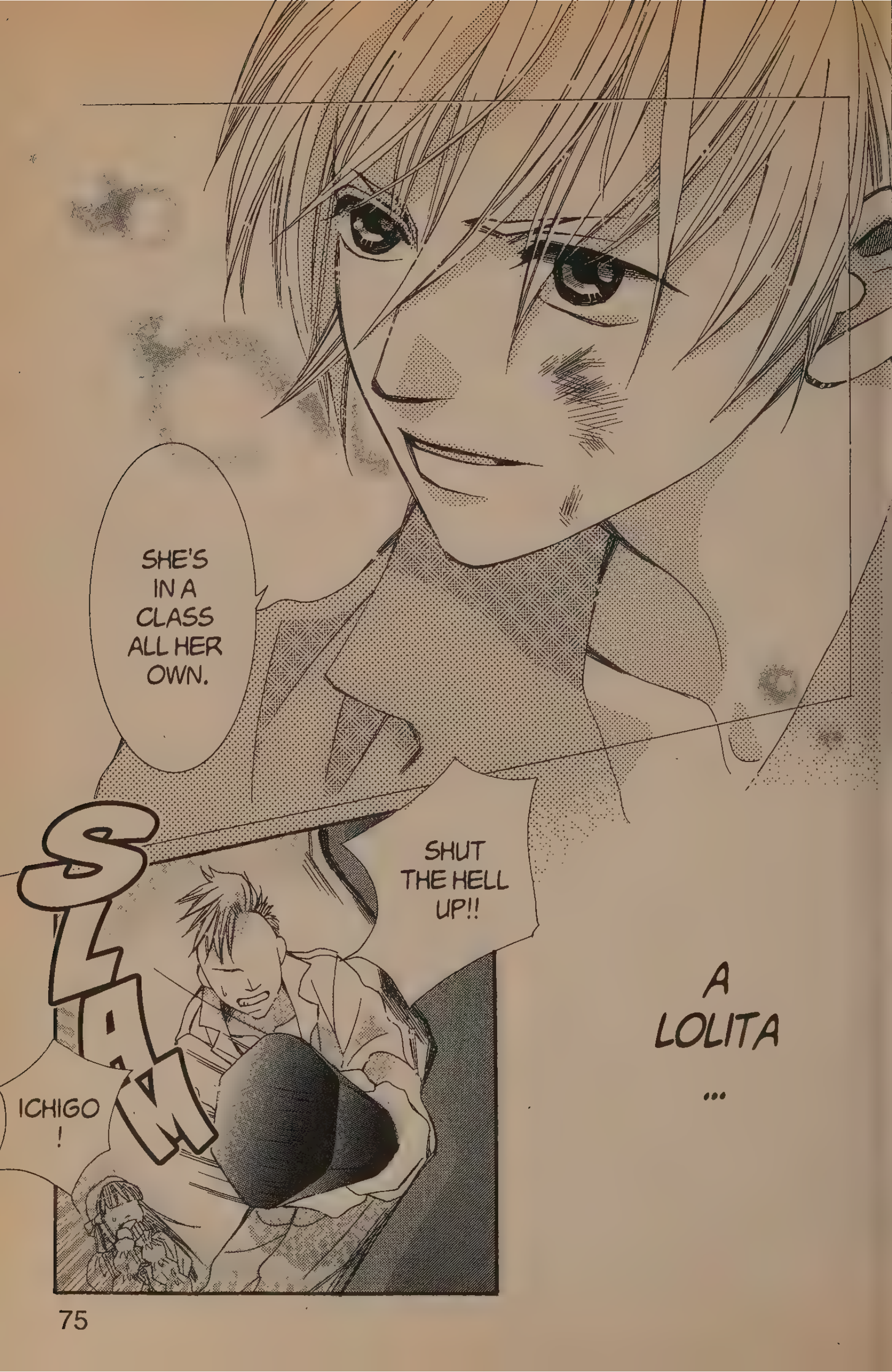

ACTUALLY, AFTER AKIMI-SAN RETIRED, THE TEAM RULES SUDDENLY BECAME STRICT, AND WHAT SENIOR MEMBERS SAID BECAME LAW, AND I WAS BEGINNING TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE.
IT'S A GOOD OPPORTUNITY. I'LL RIDE MY BIKE ALONE FROM NOW.
SO I'LL GO...
...AND RECEIVE MY PUNISHMENT.
ICHIGO...
VRRRM
SHE CAME, AND SHE'S ALREADY LEAVING?
Ichigo is a busy one.
NOW THAT SPRING'S COMING, I'LL BE BUSY WITH MY TEKIYA JOB.
HEY YOU LOSER-OF-A-FATHER, WHEN A BIKER GANG DEALS OUT PUNISHMENT TO A MEMBER, WHAT DO THEY DO?
HUH?

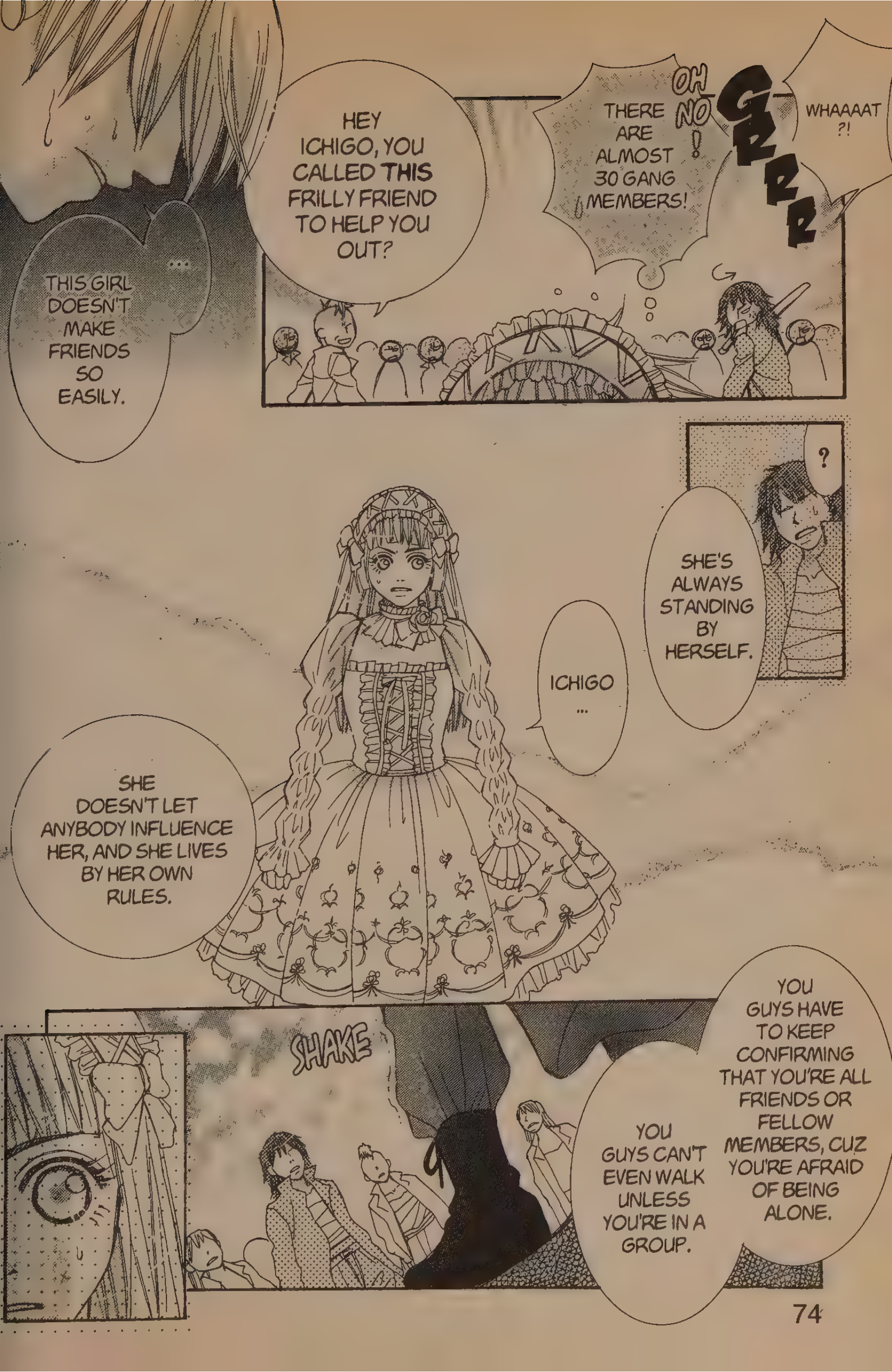

...THAT I NEVER NEEDED ANY FRIENDS...
...SHE'S...
MOMO-KO?
...A REAL FRIEND OF MINE!
WHY AM I GOING ...?

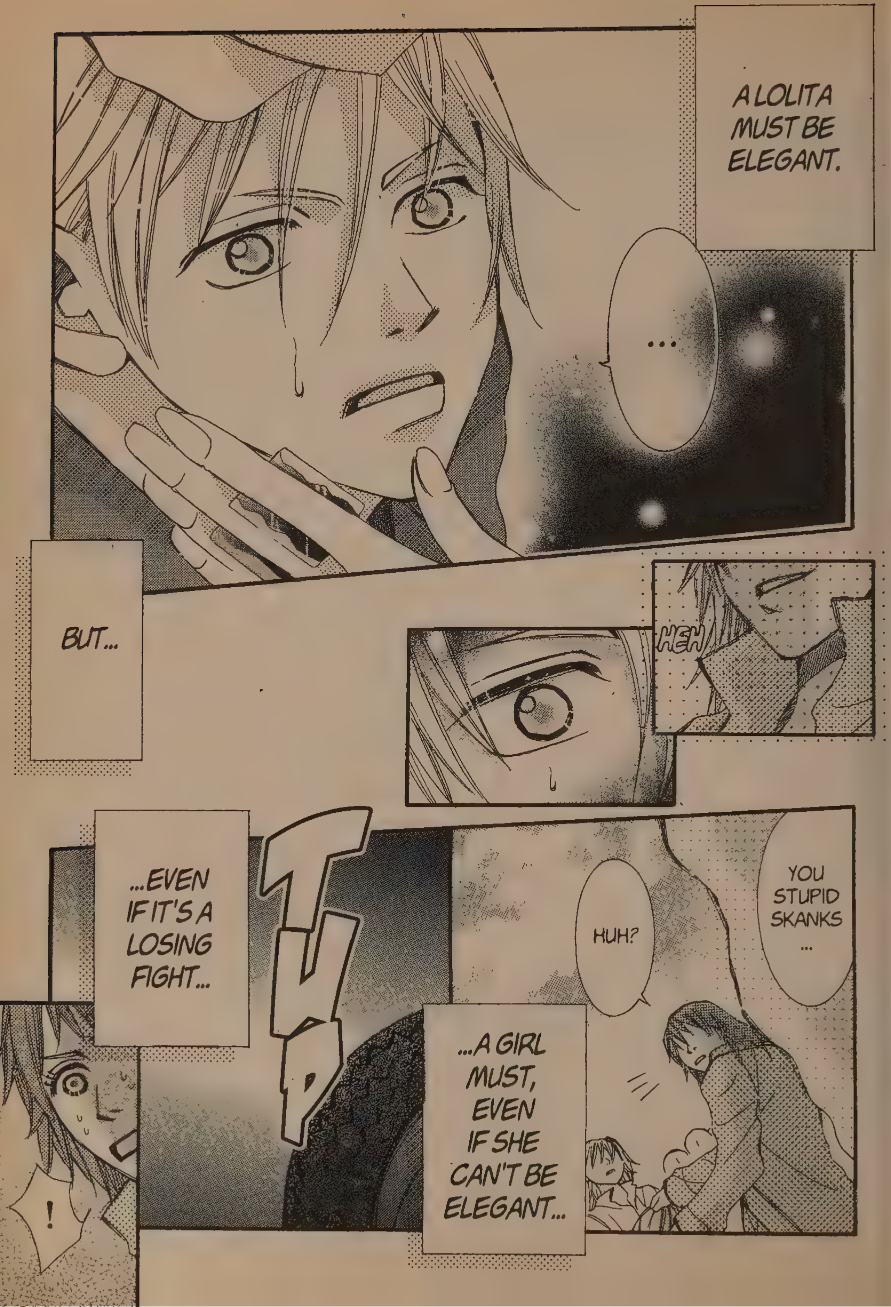

YES...ALL ALONE!
....
THIS IS HER PROBLEM.
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT BEING ALL BY MYSELF WAS FINE.
BUT SHE'S...
SHE'S...
ALWAYS...

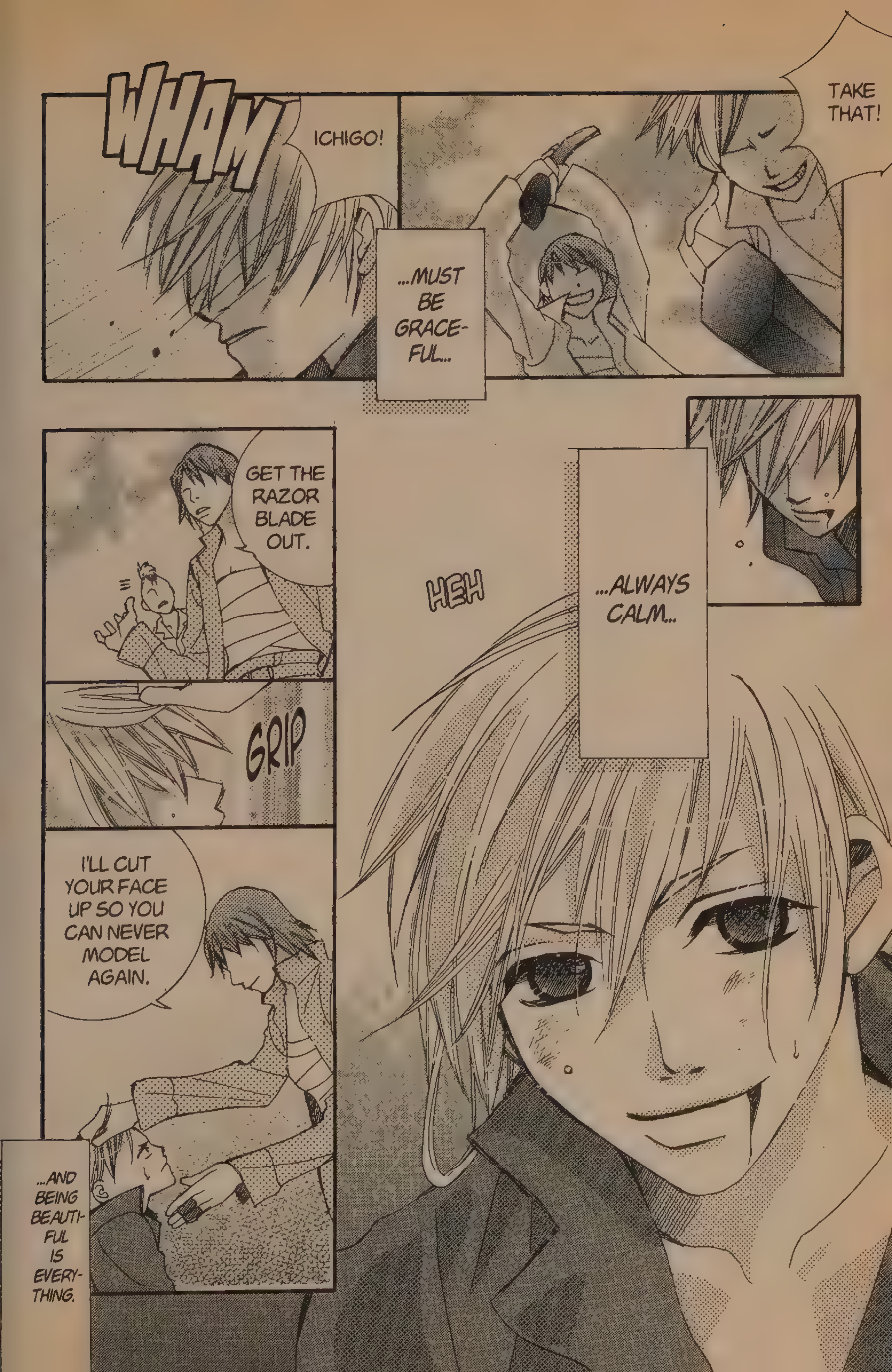

...I'M GOING FOR MY SAKE.
ICHIGOOOO !!
M–
MOMO-KO!
WHAT THE HELL DID'YA COME HERE FOR?!
DM
I-I...
...JUST HAPPENED ... ...to drop by...

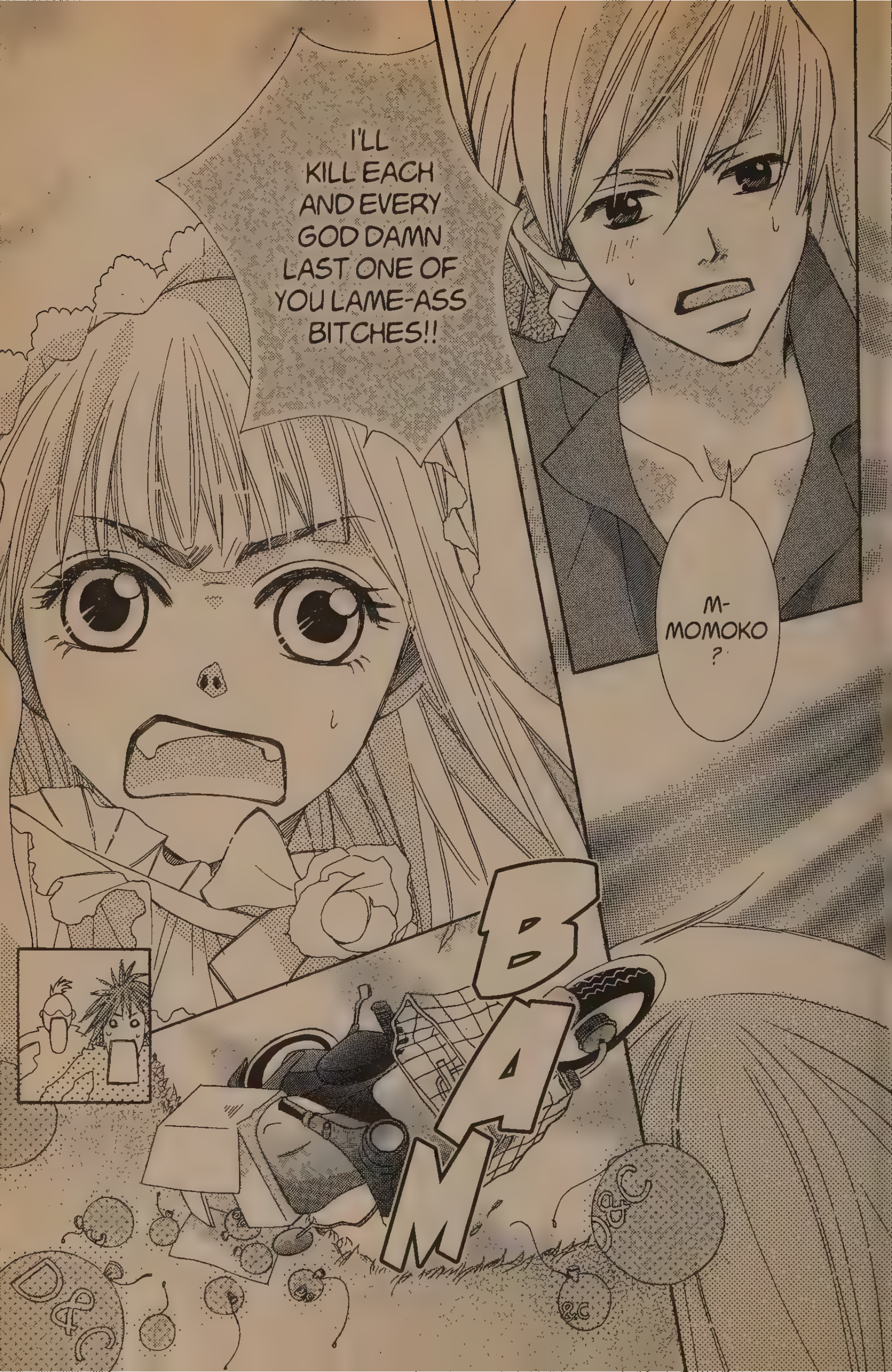

THAT'S MY BIKE!!
VRRRRM
...EVEN IF I DID GET THERE, WHAT WOULD I BE ABLE TO DO?
BMP
!
AM I GOING THERE TO SAVE ICHIGO?
NO...
GRIP
VRRRM
...I'M...

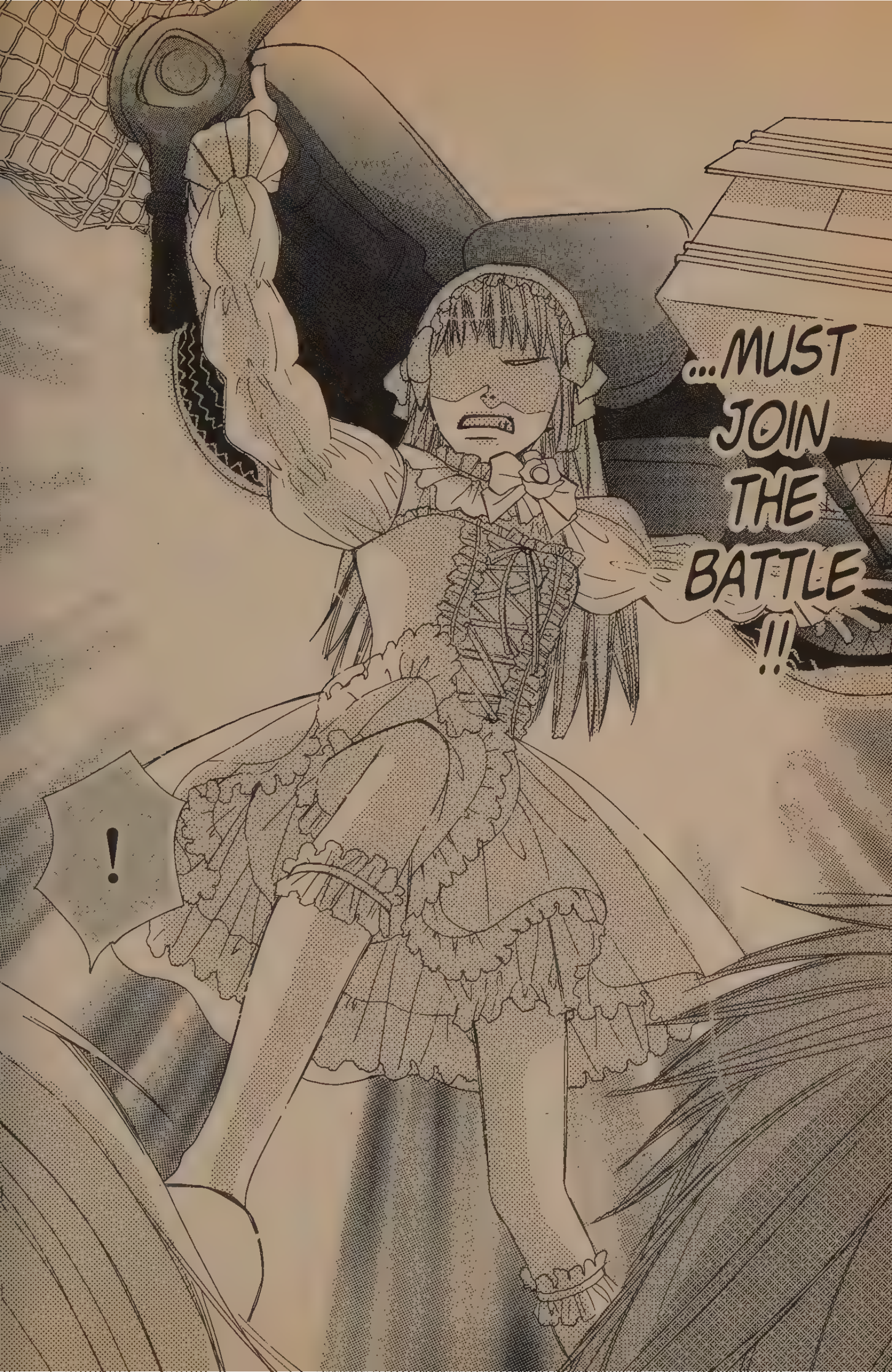

SHE'S IN A CLASS ALL HER OWN.
A LOLITA ...
SHUT THE HELL UP!!
SLAM
ICHIGO !

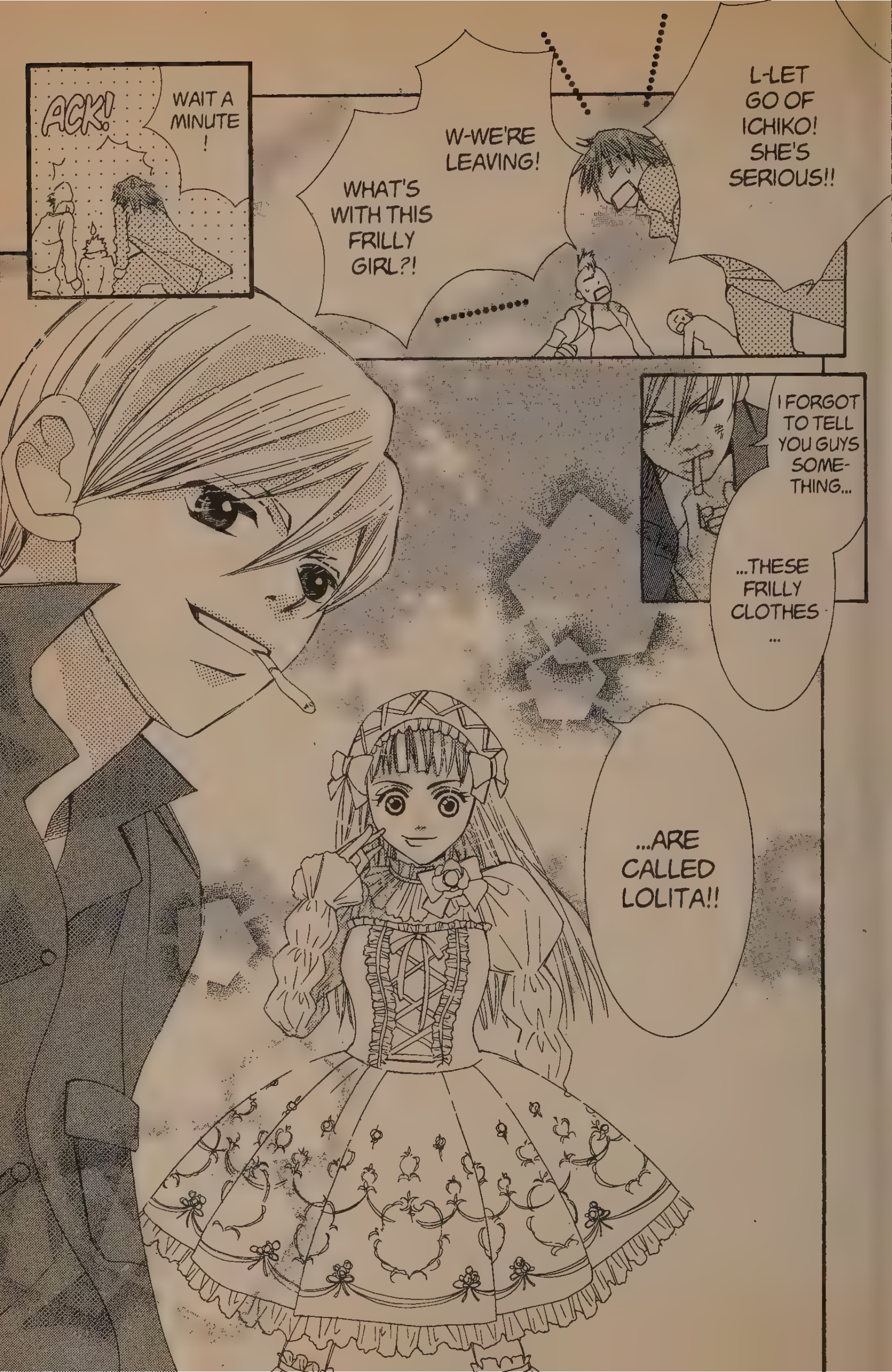

WHAAAAT ?!
GRRR
OH NO!
THERE ARE ALMOST 30 GANG MEMBERS!
HEY ICHIGO, YOU CALLED **THIS** FRILLY FRIEND TO HELP YOU OUT?
...
THIS GIRL DOESN'T MAKE FRIENDS SO EASILY.
?
SHE'S ALWAYS STANDING BY HERSELF.
ICHIGO ...
SHE DOESN'T LET ANYBODY INFLUENCE HER, AND SHE LIVES BY HER OWN RULES.
YOU GUYS HAVE TO KEEP CONFIRMING THAT YOU'RE ALL FRIENDS OR FELLOW MEMBERS, CUZ YOU'RE AFRAID OF BEING ALONE.
YOU GUYS CAN'T EVEN WALK UNLESS YOU'RE IN A GROUP.
SHAKE

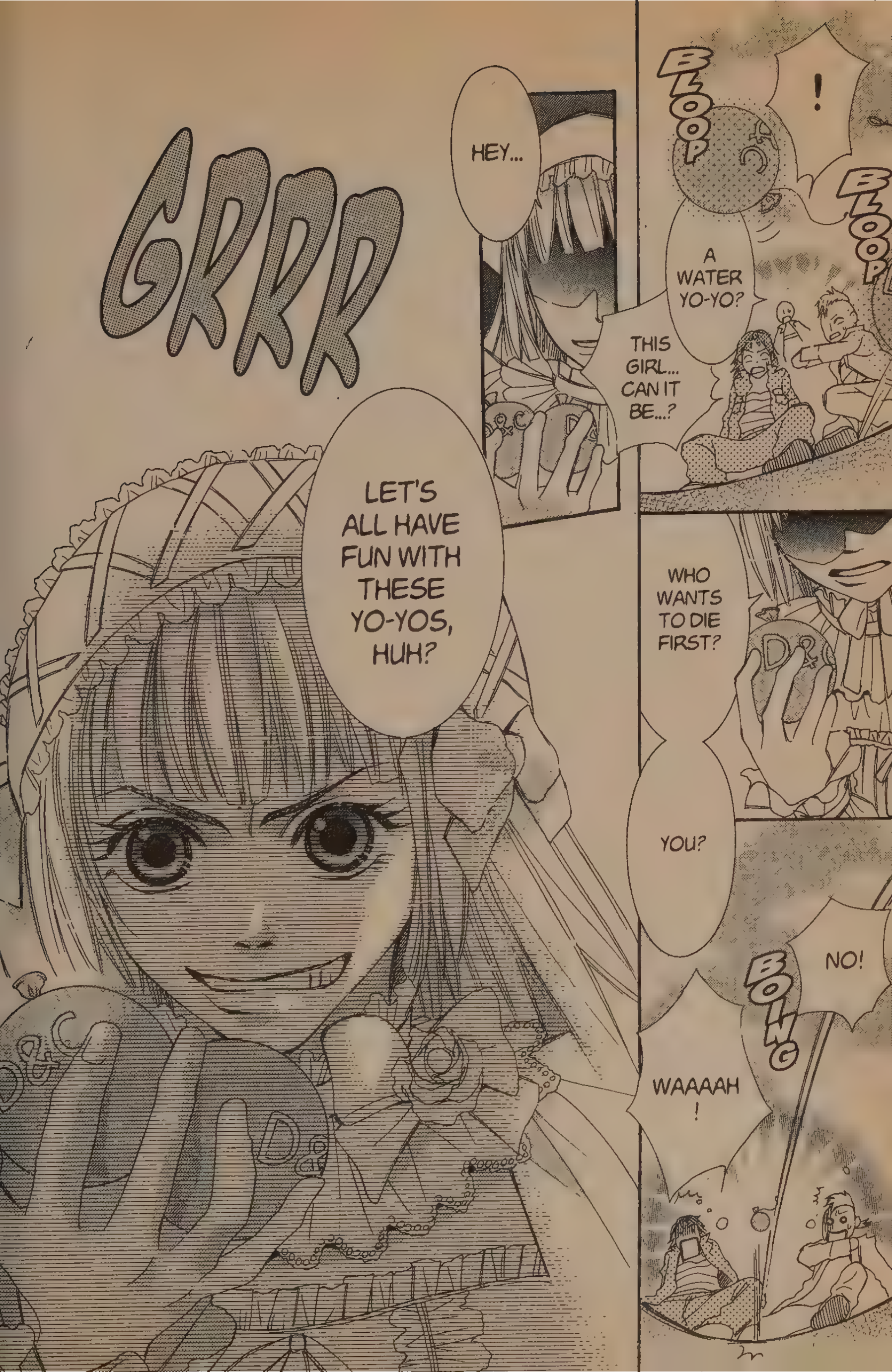

A LOLITA MUST BE ELEGANT.
...
HEH
BUT...
YOU STUPID SKANKS ...
HUH?
...A GIRL MUST, EVEN IF SHE CAN'T BE ELEGANT...
...EVEN IF IT'S A LOSING FIGHT...
TUP
!

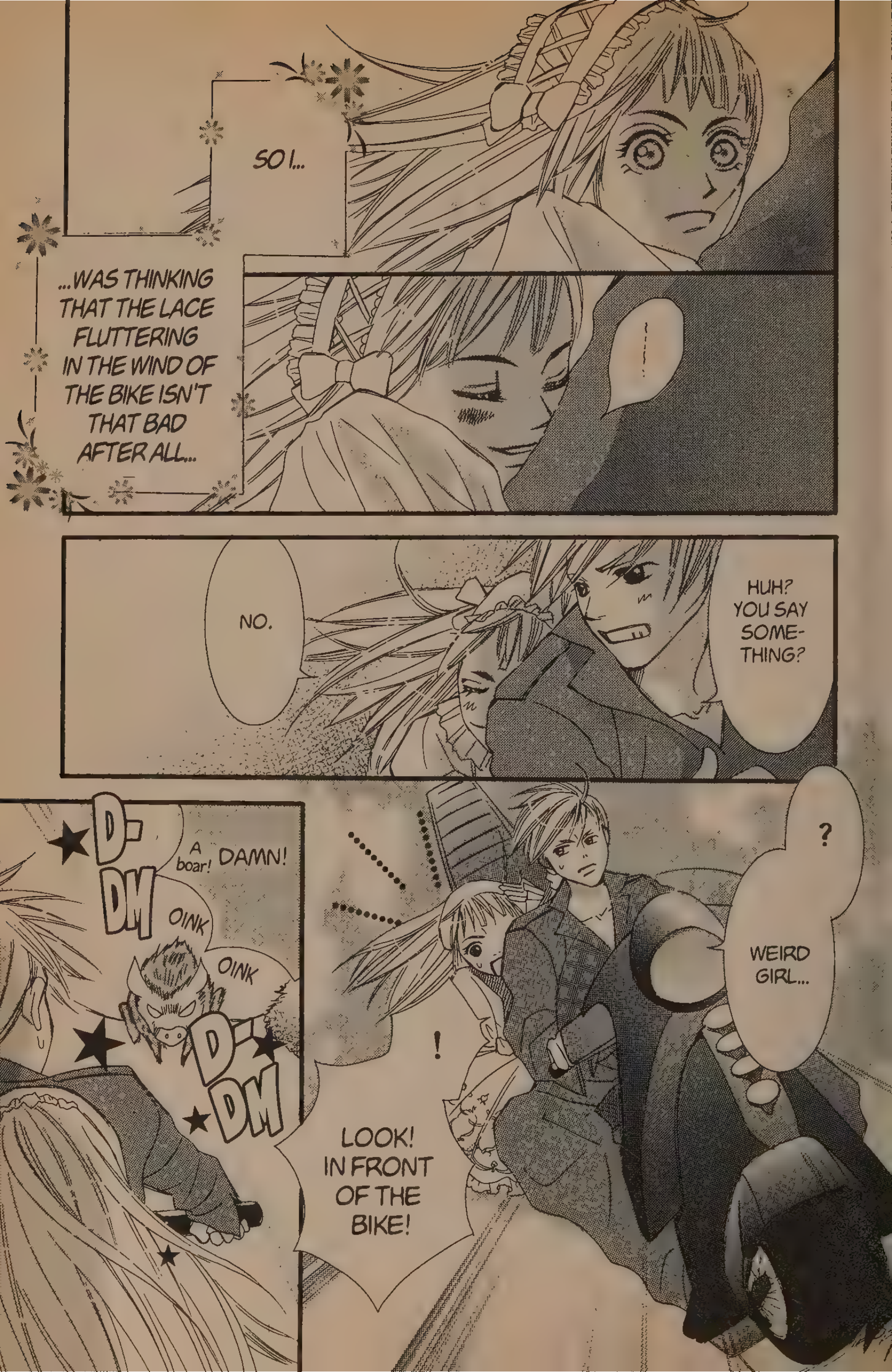

TAKE THAT!
WHAM
ICHIGO!
...MUST BE GRACEFUL...
...ALWAYS CALM...
HEH
GET THE RAZOR BLADE OUT.
GRIP
I'LL CUT YOUR FACE UP SO YOU CAN NEVER MODEL AGAIN.
...AND BEING BEAUTIFUL IS EVERYTHING.

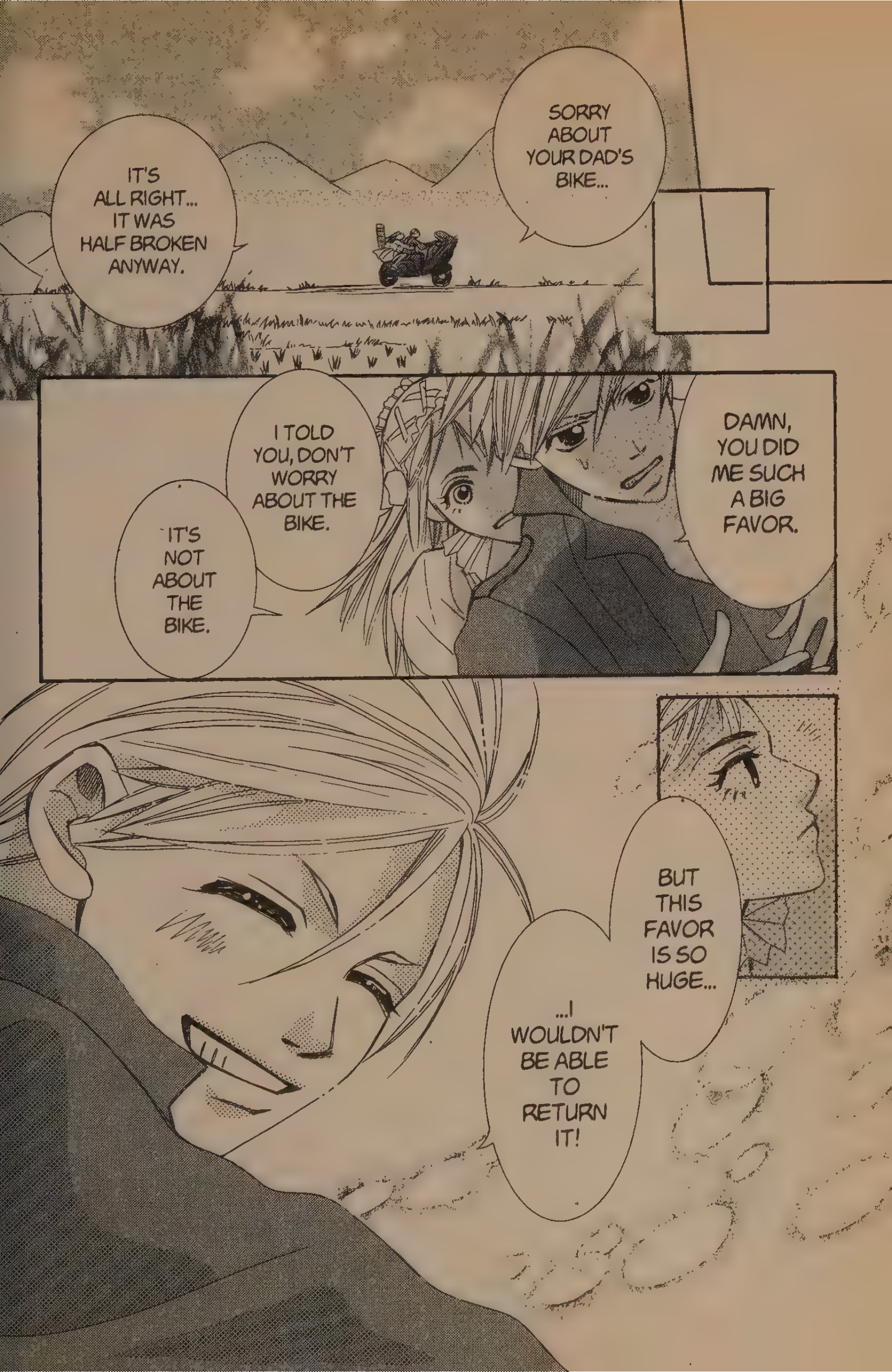

I'LL KILL EACH AND EVERY GOD DAMN LAST ONE OF YOU LAME-ASS BITCHES!!
M-MOMOKO?
BAM
D&C

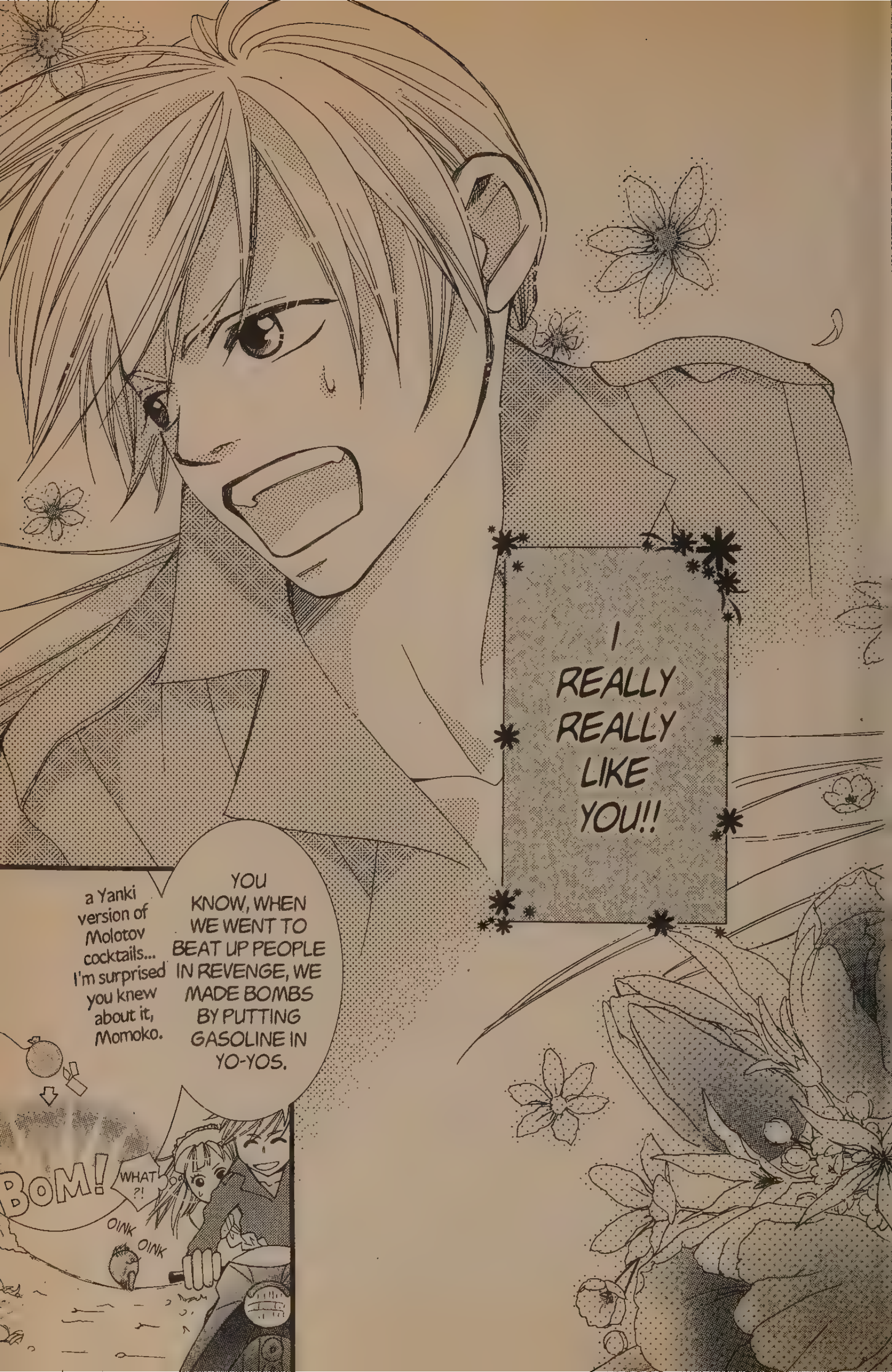

...MUST JOIN THE BATTLE !!
!

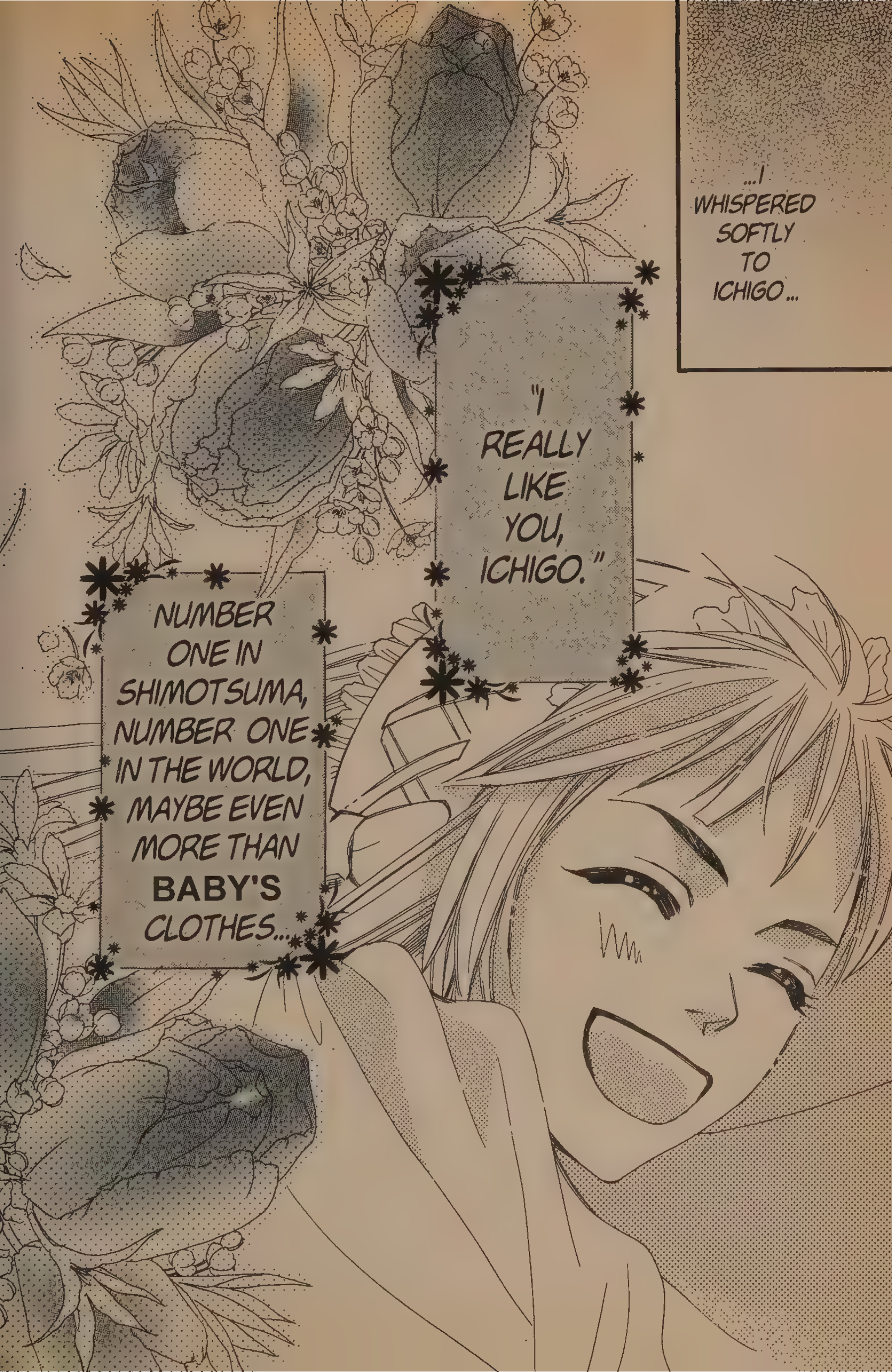

L-LET GO OF ICHIKO! SHE'S SERIOUS!!
W-WE'RE LEAVING!
WHAT'S WITH THIS FRILLY GIRL?!
ACK!
WAIT A MINUTE!
I FORGOT TO TELL YOU GUYS SOMETHING...
...THESE FRILLY CLOTHES...
...ARE CALLED LOLITA!!


BLOOP
!
BLOOP
A WATER YO-YO?
THIS GIRL... CAN IT BE...?
HEY...
GRRR
LET'S ALL HAVE FUN WITH THESE YO-YOS, HUH?
WHO WANTS TO DIE FIRST?
YOU?
NO!
BOING
WAAAAH!


SO I...
...WAS THINKING THAT THE LACE FLUTTERING IN THE WIND OF THE BIKE ISN'T THAT BAD AFTER ALL...
HUH? YOU SAY SOMETHING?
NO.
?
WEIRD GIRL...
!
LOOK! IN FRONT OF THE BIKE!
DAMN!
A boar!
D-DM
OINK
OINK
D-DM


SORRY ABOUT YOUR DAD'S BIKE...
IT'S ALL RIGHT... IT WAS HALF BROKEN ANYWAY.
DAMN, YOU DID ME SUCH A BIG FAVOR.
I TOLD YOU, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE BIKE.
IT'S NOT ABOUT THE BIKE.
BUT THIS FAVOR IS SO HUGE...
...I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO RETURN IT!

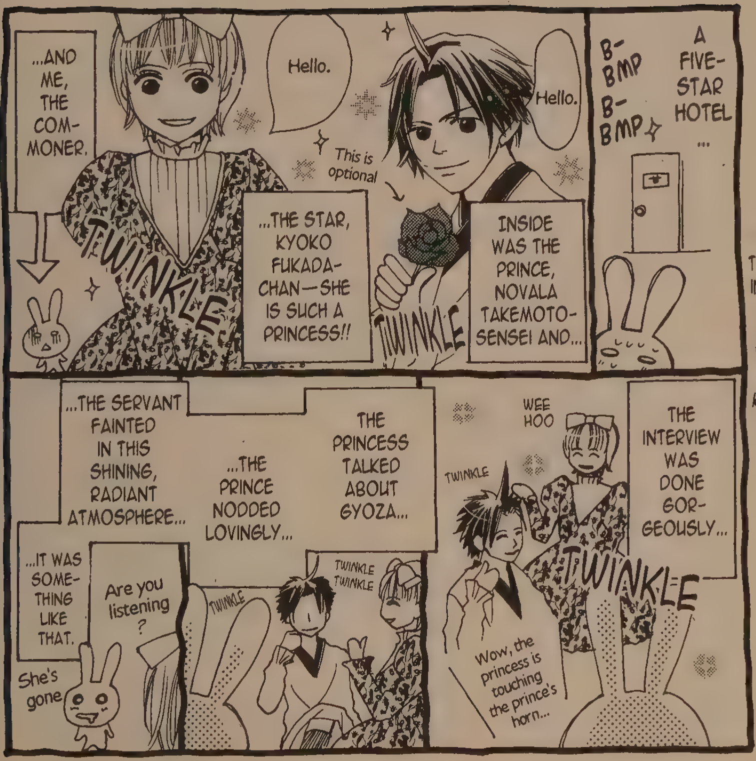

I REALLY REALLY LIKE YOU!!
YOU KNOW, WHEN WE WENT TO BEAT UP PEOPLE IN REVENGE, WE MADE BOMBS BY PUTTING GASOLINE IN YO-YOS.
a Yanki version of Molotov cocktails... I'm surprised you knew about it, Momoko.
WHAT ?!
BOM!
OINK OINK


...I WHISPERED SOFTLY TO ICHIGO...
"I REALLY LIKE YOU, ICHIGO."
NUMBER ONE IN SHIMOTSUMA, NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD, MAYBE EVEN MORE THAN **BABY'S** CLOTHES...

Kamikaze Girls

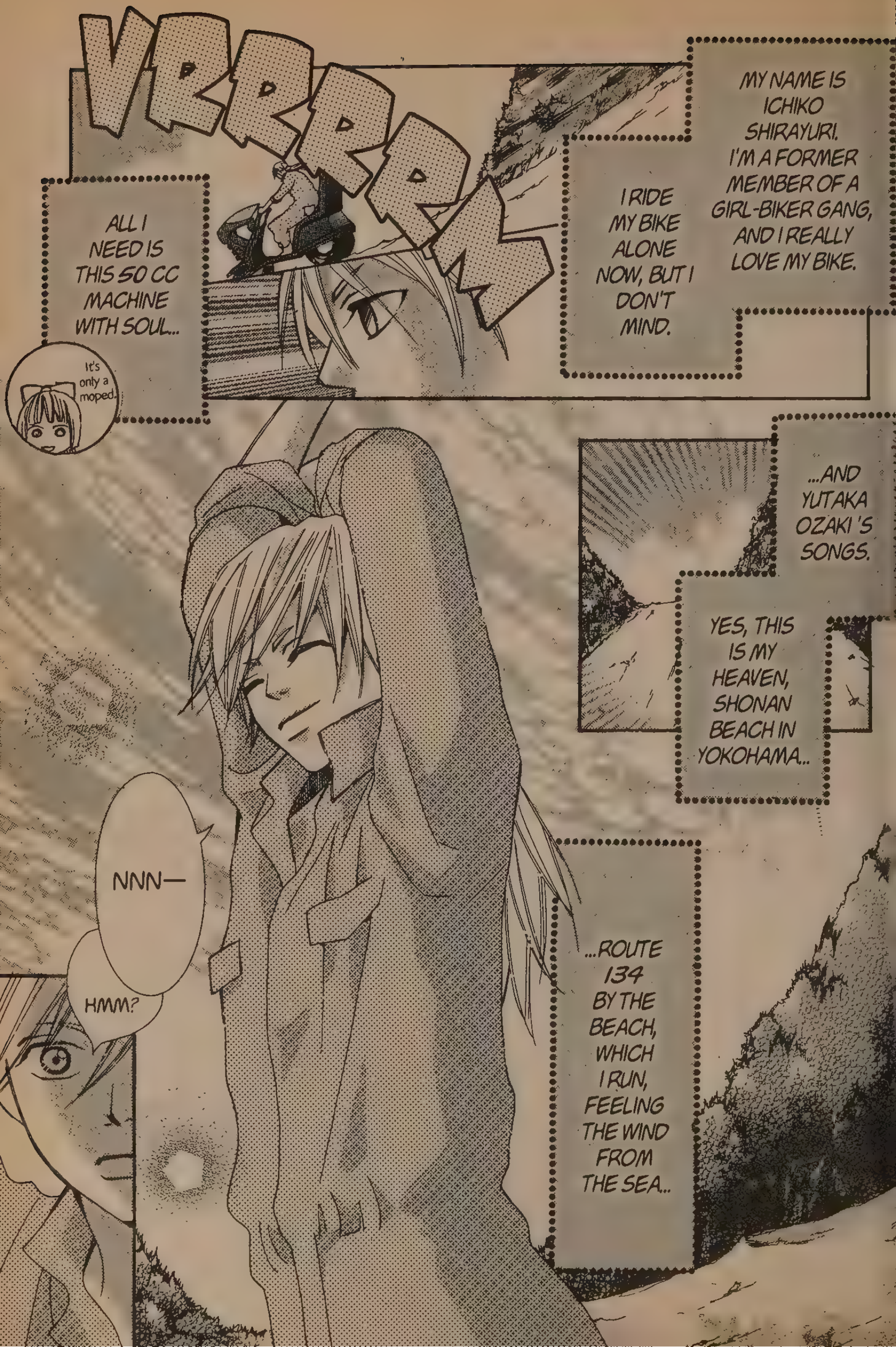
(Ichigo's Case)

Original idea by
Novala Takemoto

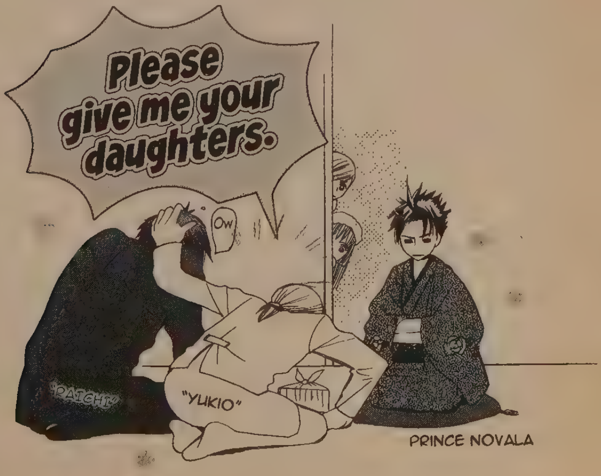

A FIVE-STAR HOTEL ...
B-BMP B-BMP
INSIDE WAS THE PRINCE, NOVALA TAKEMOTO-SENSEI AND...
Hello.
This is optional
TWINKLE
...THE STAR, KYOKO FUKADA-CHAN—SHE IS SUCH A PRINCESS!!
Hello.
...AND ME, THE COMMONER.
TWINKLE
THE INTERVIEW WAS DONE GORGEOUSLY...
WEE HOO
TWINKLE
TWINKLE
Wow, the princess is touching the prince's horn...
THE PRINCESS TALKED ABOUT GYOZA...
...THE PRINCE NODDED LOVINGLY...
...THE SERVANT FAINTED IN THIS SHINING, RADIANT ATMOSPHERE...
TWINKLE TWINKLE
TWINKLE
Are you listening?
...IT WAS SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
She's gone

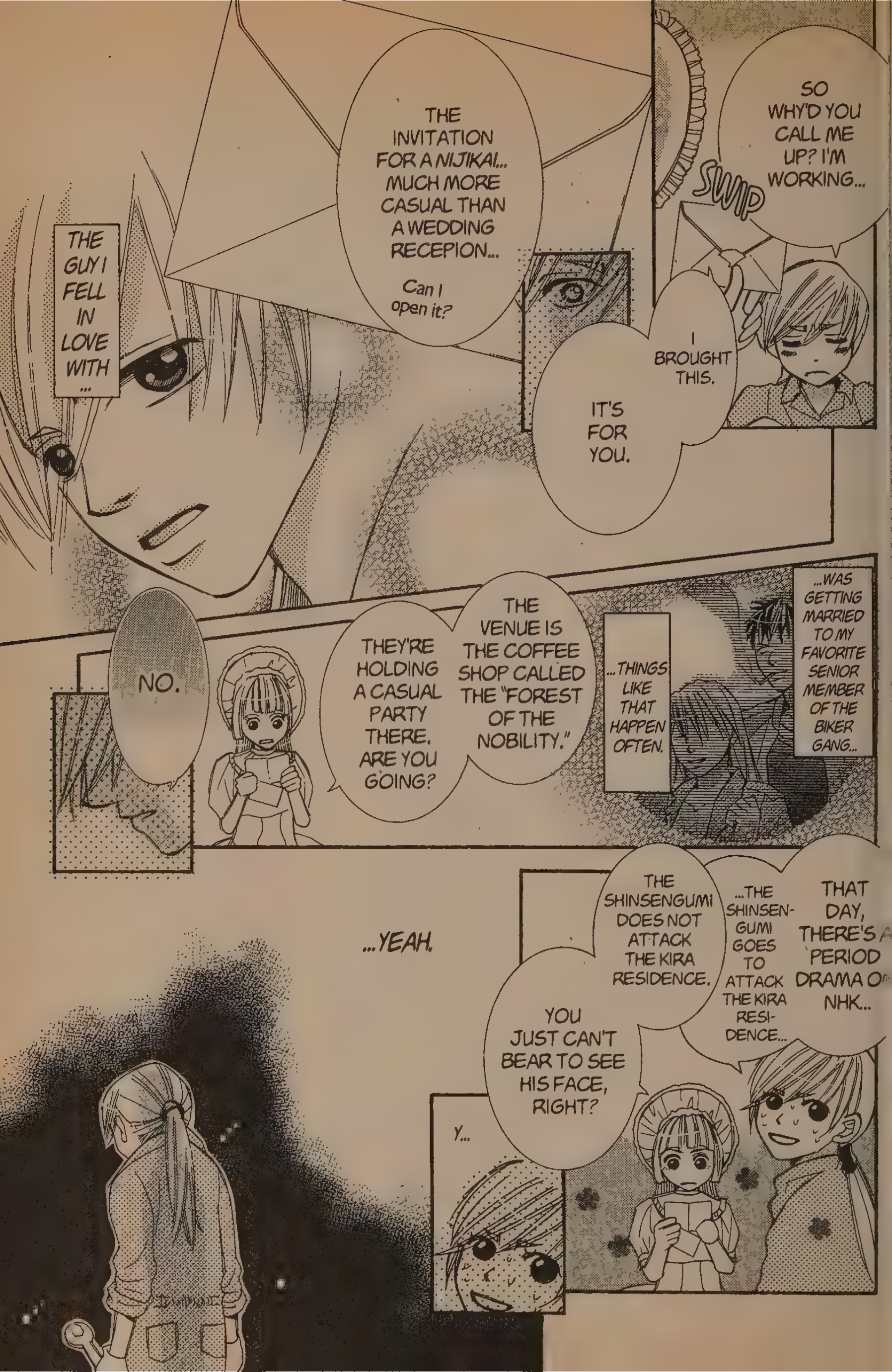
I WENT TO DO AN INTERVIEW OF THE MOVIE VERSION OF KAMIKAZE GIRLS.

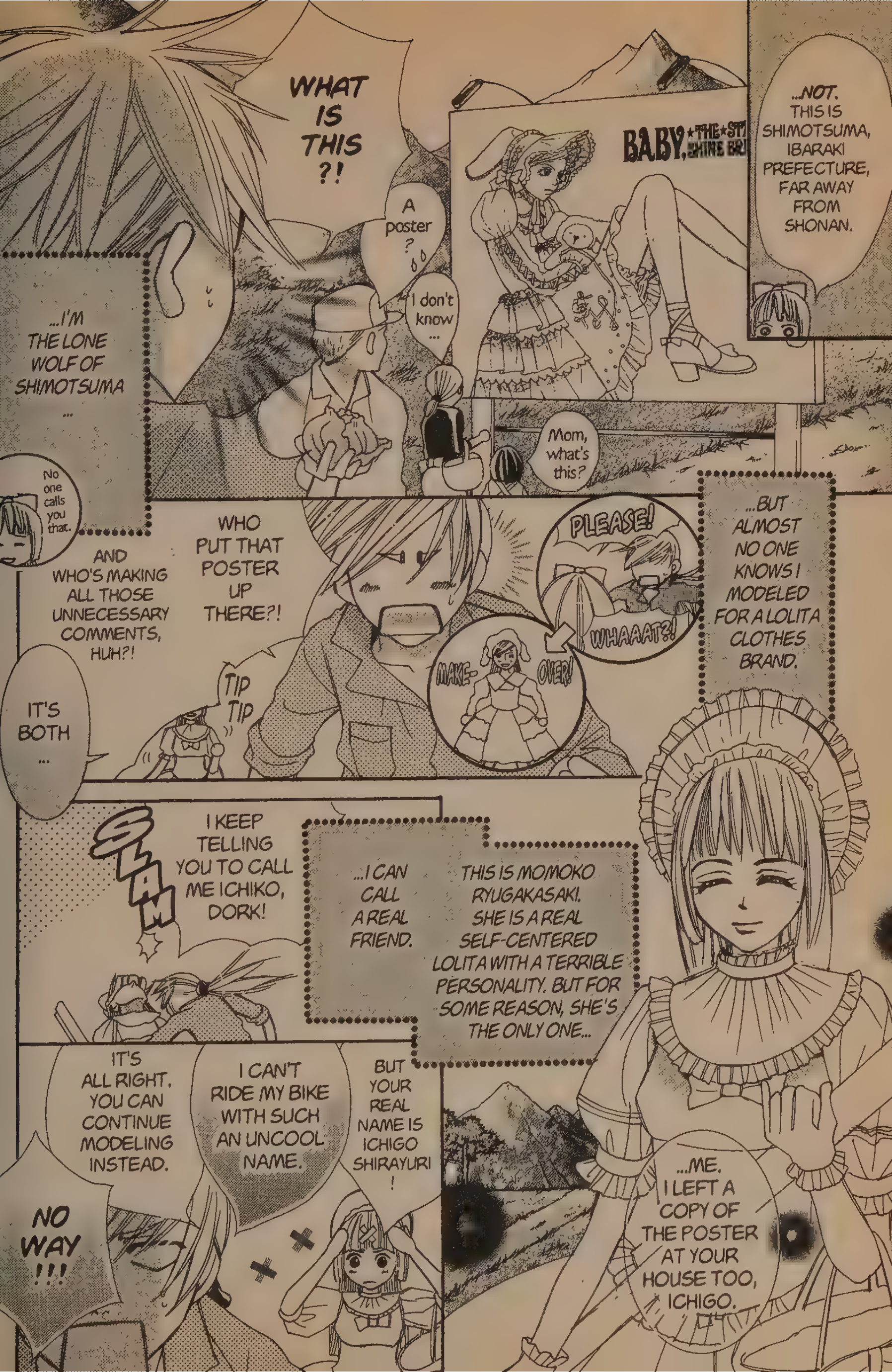
♡

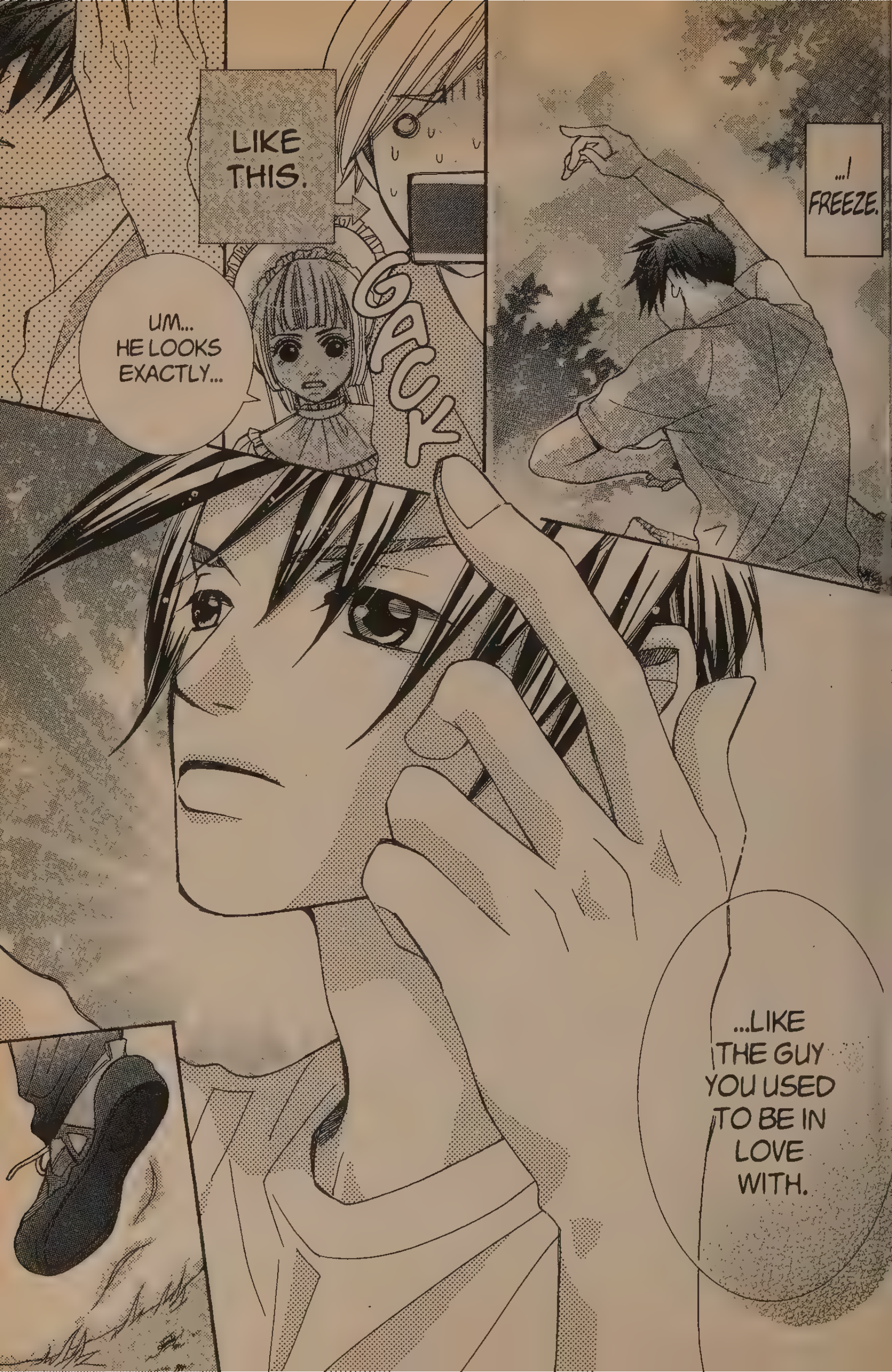

VRRRRM
MY NAME IS ICHIKO SHIRAYURI. I'M A FORMER MEMBER OF A GIRL-BIKER GANG, AND I REALLY LOVE MY BIKE.
I RIDE MY BIKE ALONE NOW, BUT I DON'T MIND.
ALL I NEED IS THIS 50 CC MACHINE WITH SOUL...
It's only a moped.
...AND YUTAKA OZAKI'S SONGS.
YES, THIS IS MY HEAVEN, SHONAN BEACH IN YOKOHAMA...
...ROUTE 134 BY THE BEACH, WHICH I RUN, FEELING THE WIND FROM THE SEA...
NNN—
HMM?

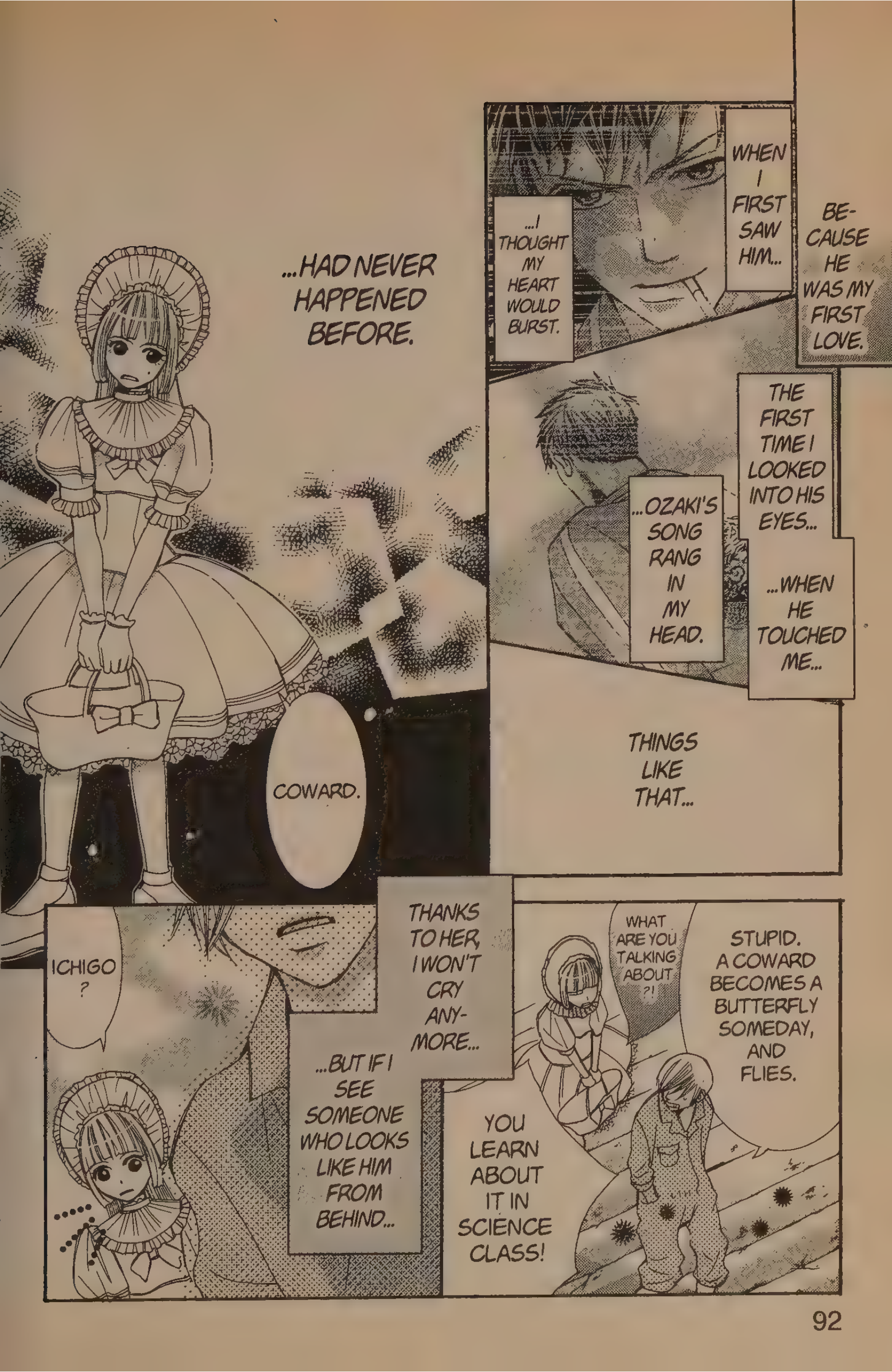
"ICHIGO'S CASE" IS A CONTINUATION OF NOVALA TAKEMOTO-SENSEI'S *KAMIKAZE GIRLS*, CREATED FOR *DELUXE BETSUCOMI*. THUS I BORROWED THE CHARACTERS OF *KAMIKAZE GIRLS*. TO EXPRESS IT VISUALLY, IT WENT SOMETHING LIKE THIS:

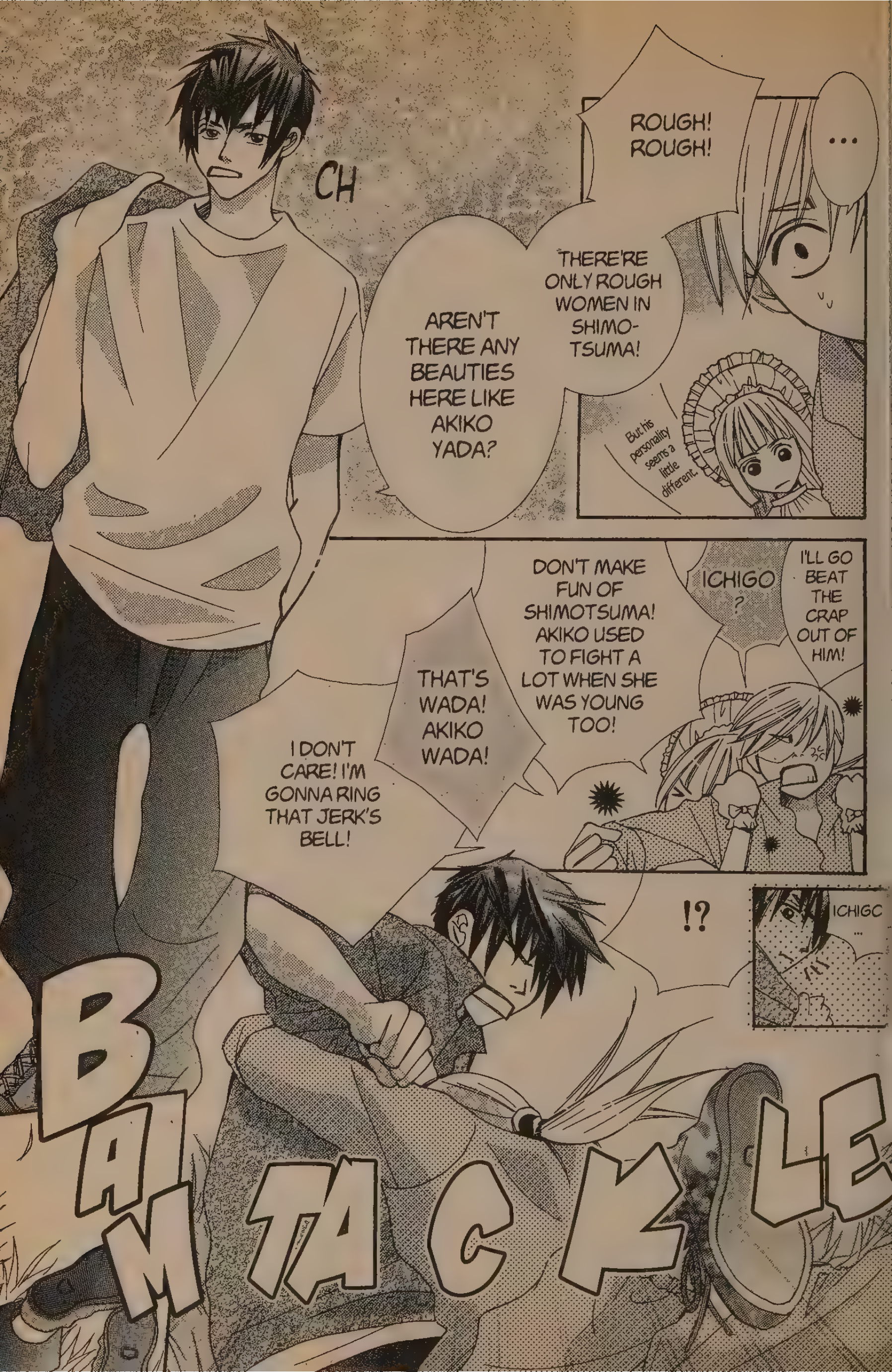

Please give me your daughters.
Ow
"RAICHI"
"YUKIO"
PRINCE NOVALA

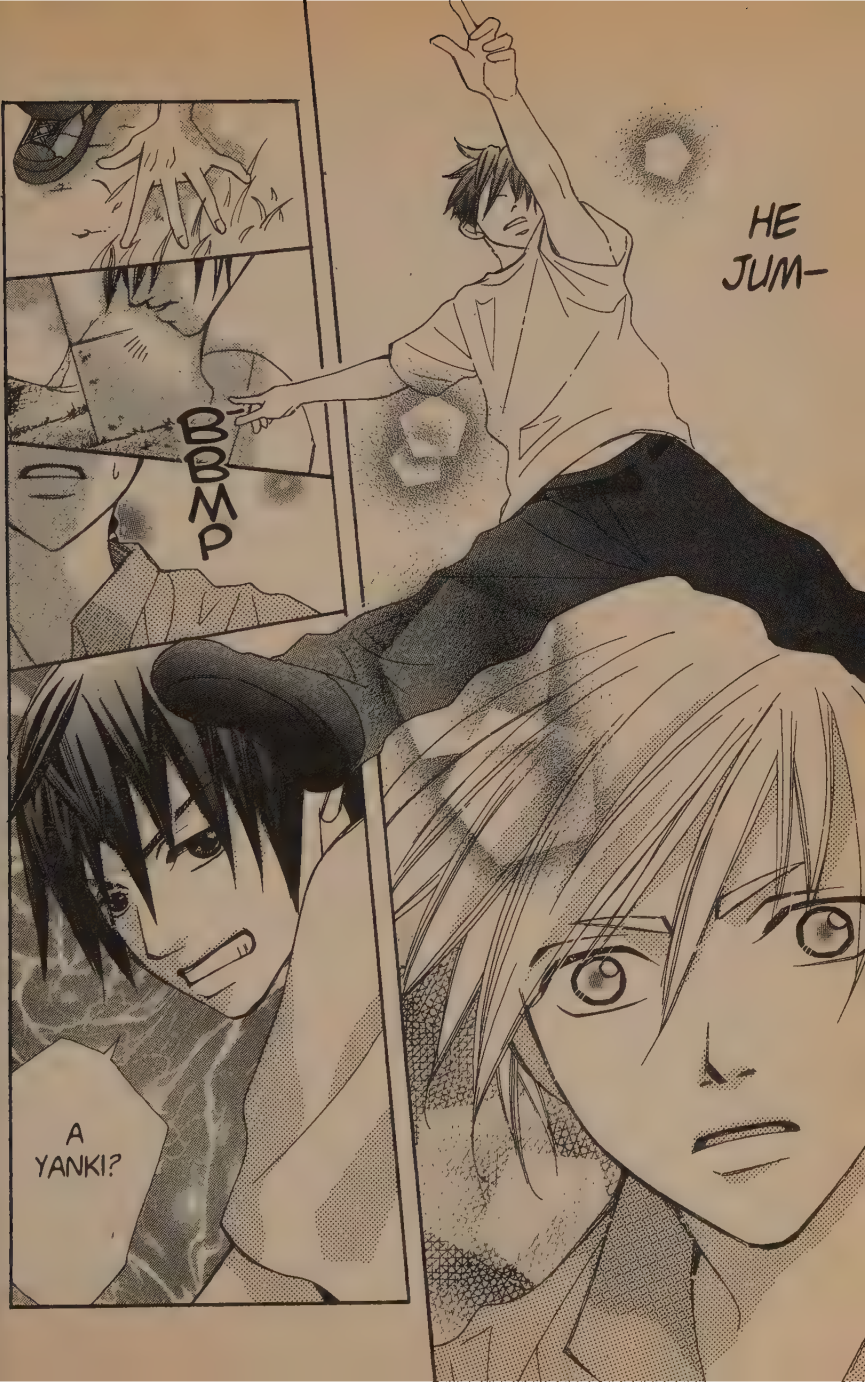

SO WHY'D YOU CALL ME UP? I'M WORKING...
SWIP
I BROUGHT THIS.
IT'S FOR YOU.
THE INVITATION FOR A NIJIKAI... MUCH MORE CASUAL THAN A WEDDING RECEPION...
Can I open it?
THE GUY I FELL IN LOVE WITH...
...WAS GETTING MARRIED TO MY FAVORITE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE BIKER GANG...
...THINGS LIKE THAT HAPPEN OFTEN.
THE VENUE IS THE COFFEE SHOP CALLED THE "FOREST OF THE NOBILITY."
THEY'RE HOLDING A CASUAL PARTY THERE. ARE YOU GOING?
NO.
THAT DAY, THERE'S A PERIOD DRAMA O NHK...
...THE SHINSENGUMI GOES TO ATTACK THE KIRA RESIDENCE...
THE SHINSENGUMI DOES NOT ATTACK THE KIRA RESIDENCE.
YOU JUST CAN'T BEAR TO SEE HIS FACE, RIGHT?
Y...
...YEAH.

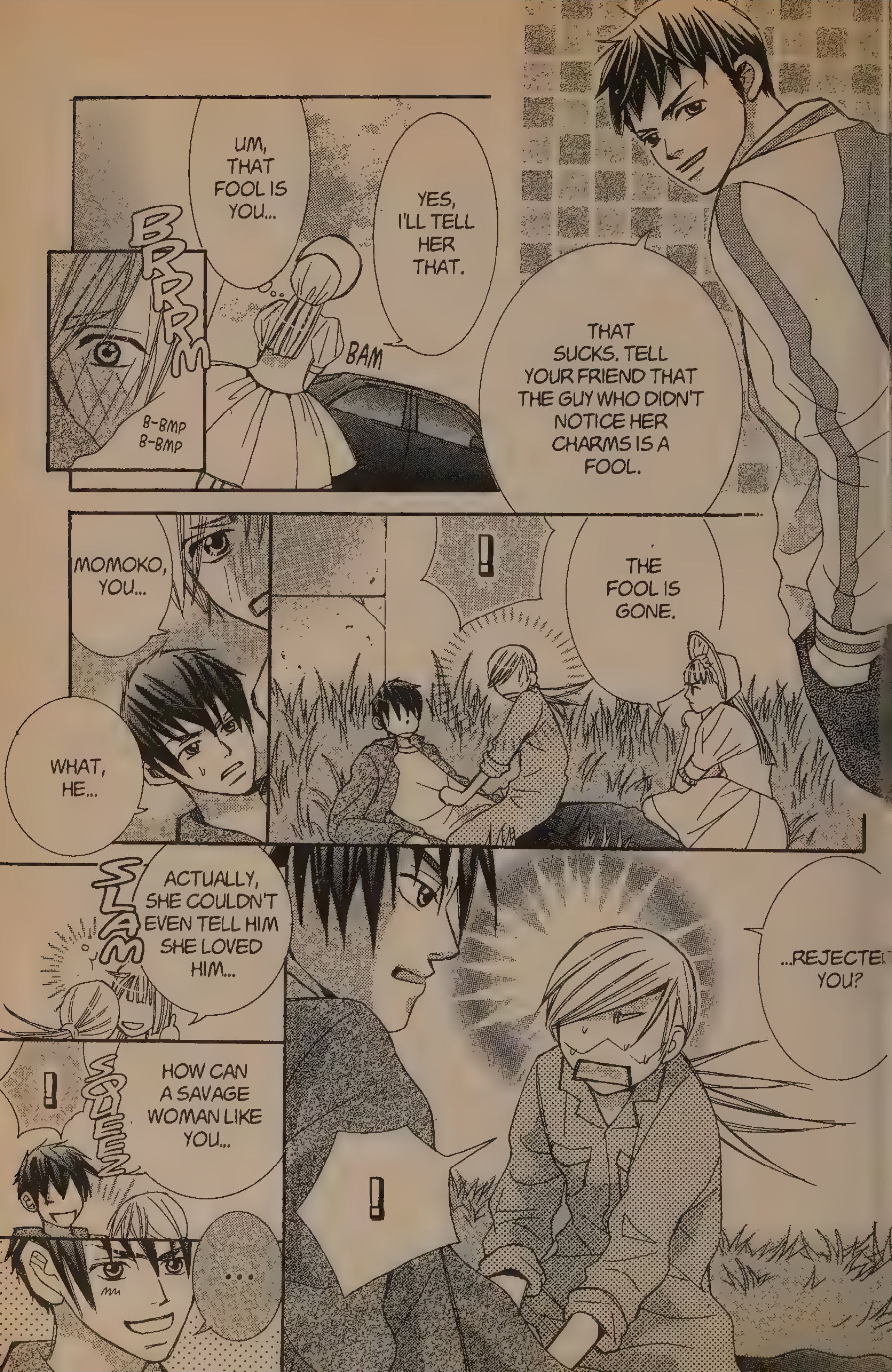

...NOT. THIS IS SHIMOTSUMA, IBARAKI PREFECTURE, FAR AWAY FROM SHONAN.
BABY, THE STA SHINE BRI
WHAT IS THIS?!
A poster?
I don't know...
Mom, what's this?
...I'M THE LONE WOLF OF SHIMOTSUMA...
No one calls you that.
...BUT ALMOST NO ONE KNOWS I MODELED FOR A LOLITA CLOTHES BRAND.
PLEASE!
WHAAAT?!
MAKE-OVER!
WHO PUT THAT POSTER UP THERE?!
AND WHO'S MAKING ALL THOSE UNNECESSARY COMMENTS, HUH?!
TIP TIP
IT'S BOTH...
THIS IS MOMOKO RYUGAKASAKI. SHE IS A REAL SELF-CENTERED LOLITA WITH A TERRIBLE PERSONALITY. BUT FOR SOME REASON, SHE'S THE ONLY ONE...
...I CAN CALL A REAL FRIEND.
I KEEP TELLING YOU TO CALL ME ICHIKO, DORK!
SLAM
...ME. I LEFT A COPY OF THE POSTER AT YOUR HOUSE TOO, ICHIGO.
BUT YOUR REAL NAME IS ICHIGO SHIRAYURI!
I CAN'T RIDE MY BIKE WITH SUCH AN UNCOOL NAME.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU CAN CONTINUE MODELING INSTEAD.
NO WAY!!!

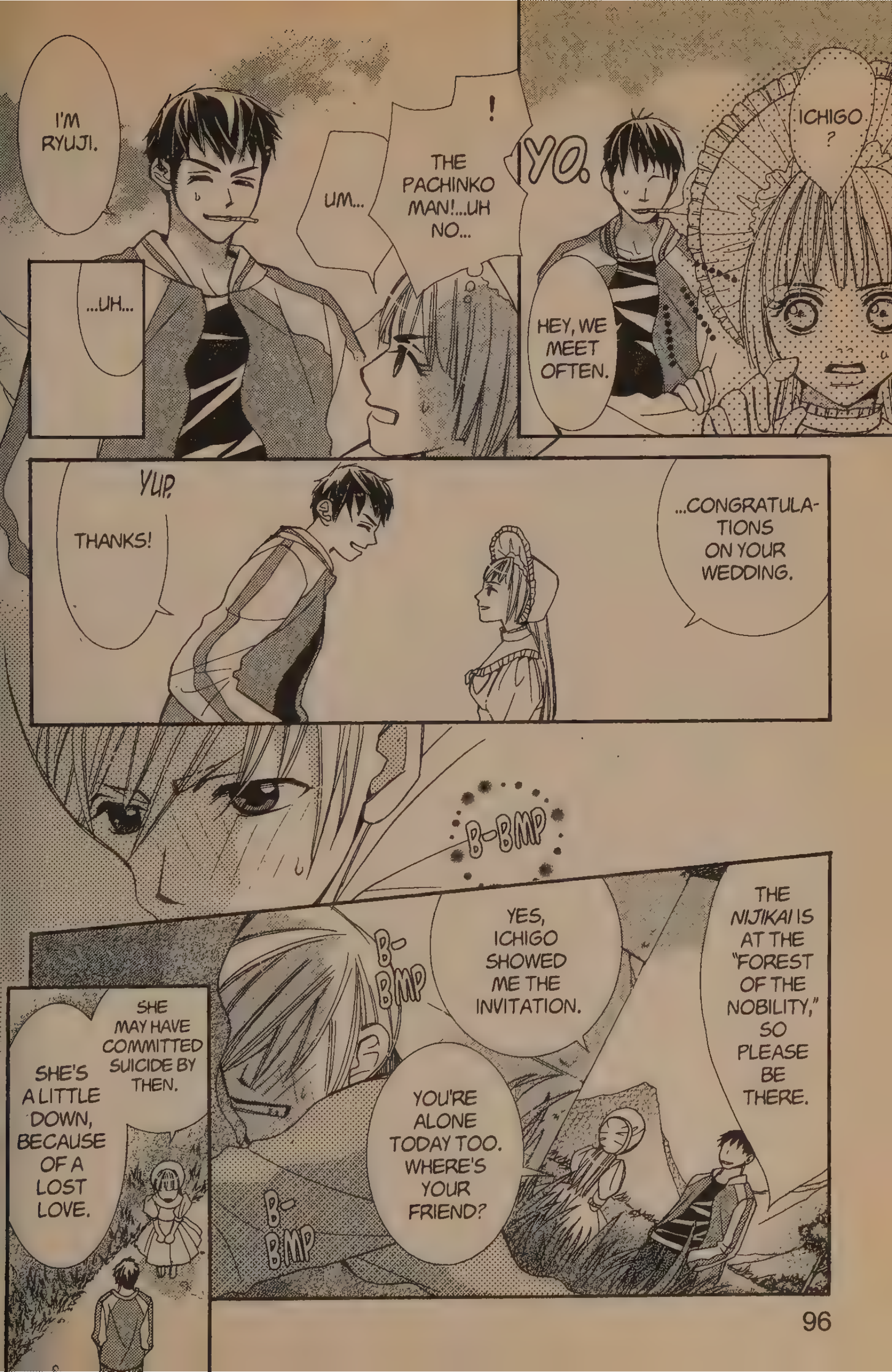

...I FREEZE.
LIKE THIS.
GACK
UM... HE LOOKS EXACTLY...
...LIKE THE GUY YOU USED TO BE IN LOVE WITH.

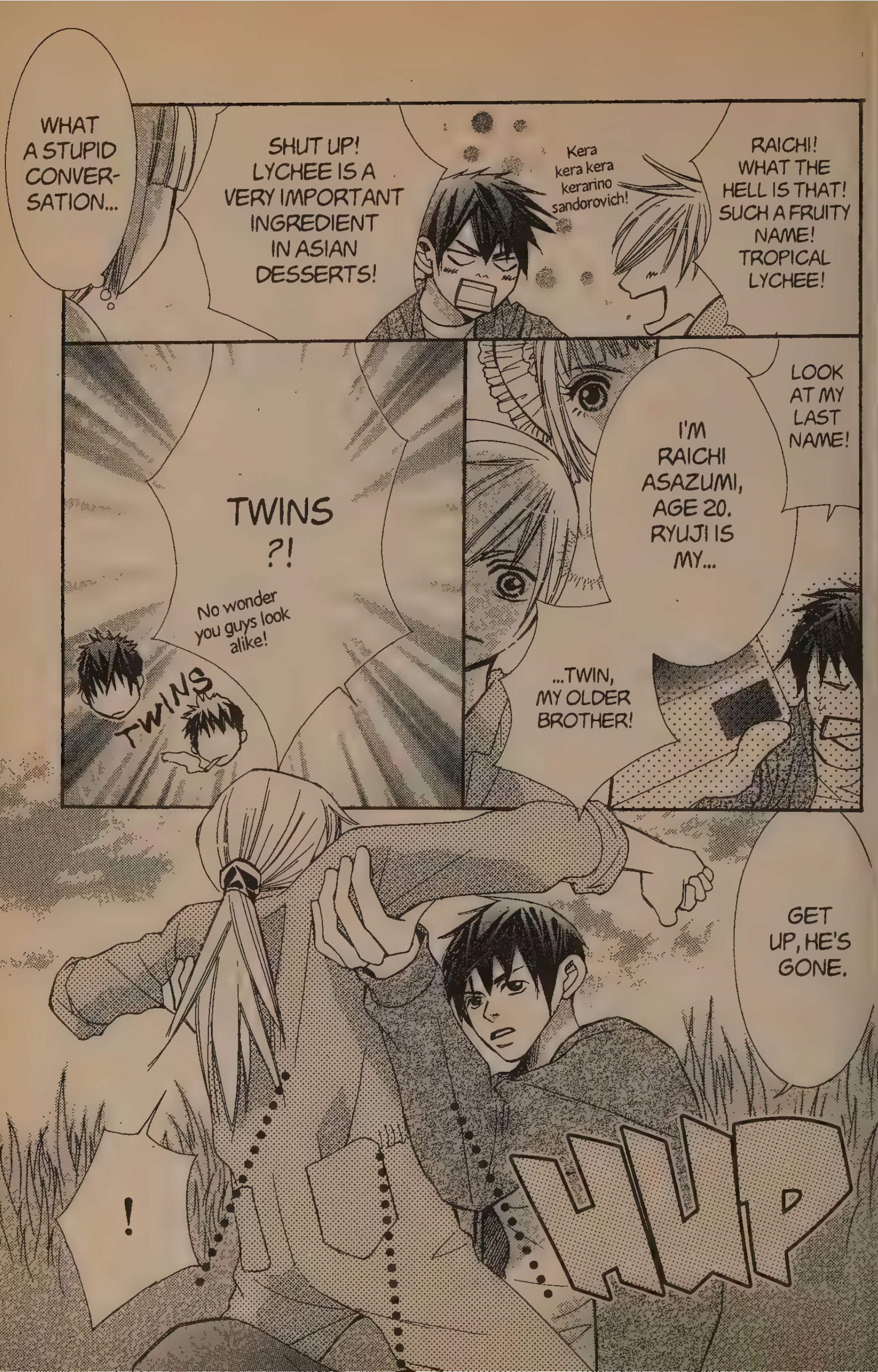

BECAUSE HE WAS MY FIRST LOVE.
WHEN I FIRST SAW HIM...
...I THOUGHT MY HEART WOULD BURST.
THE FIRST TIME I LOOKED INTO HIS EYES...
...OZAKI'S SONG RANG IN MY HEAD.
...WHEN HE TOUCHED ME...
THINGS LIKE THAT...
...HAD NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE.
COWARD.
STUPID. A COWARD BECOMES A BUTTERFLY SOMEDAY, AND FLIES.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
YOU LEARN ABOUT IT IN SCIENCE CLASS!
THANKS TO HER, I WON'T CRY ANYMORE...
...BUT IF I SEE SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE HIM FROM BEHIND...
ICHIGO?
......

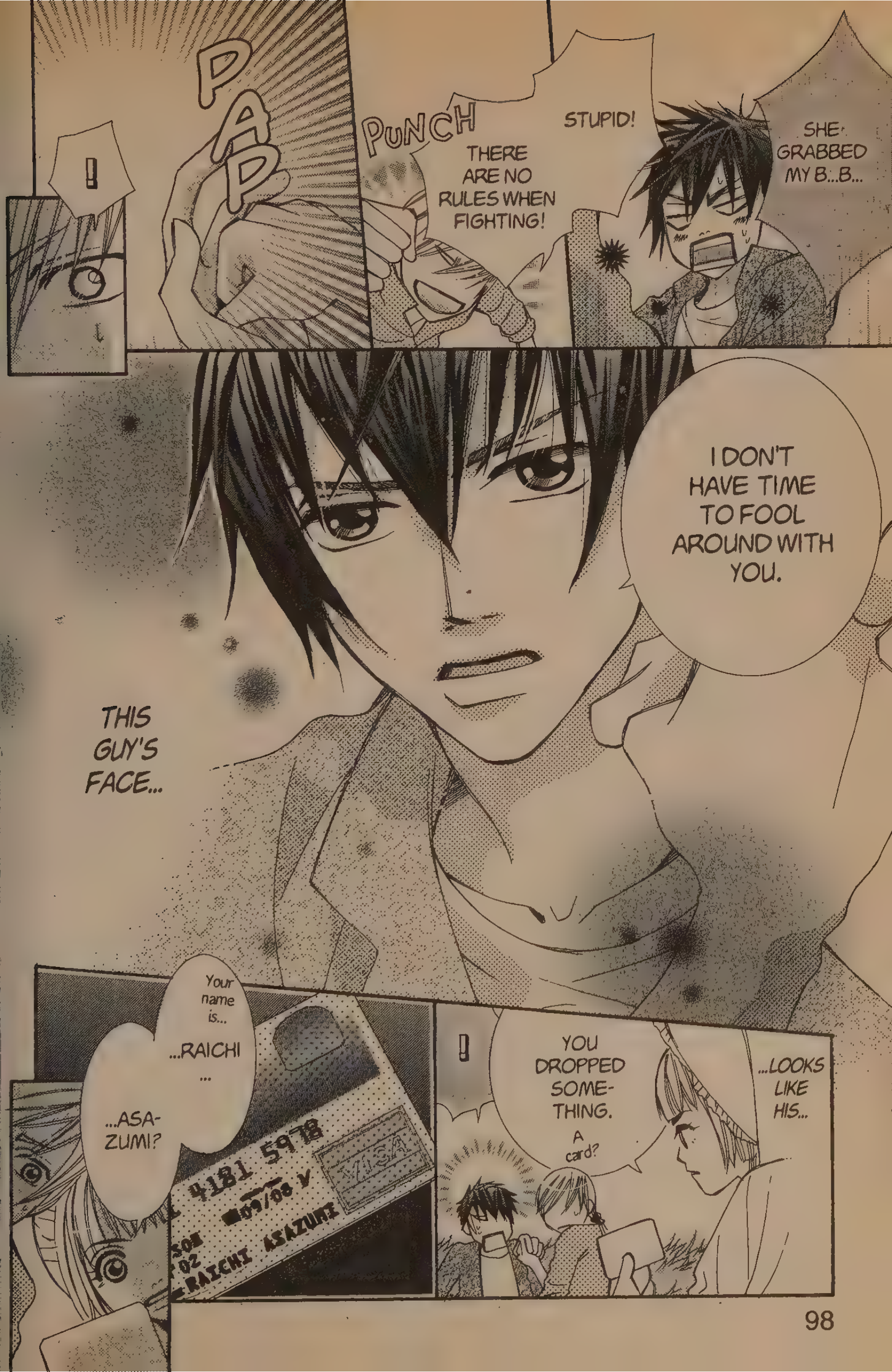

...
ROUGH! ROUGH!
THERE'RE ONLY ROUGH WOMEN IN SHIMO-TSUMA!
AREN'T THERE ANY BEAUTIES HERE LIKE AKIKO YADA?
But his personality seems a little different.
CH
I'LL GO BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF HIM!
ICHIGO?
DON'T MAKE FUN OF SHIMOTSUMA! AKIKO USED TO FIGHT A LOT WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG TOO!
THAT'S WADA! AKIKO WADA!
I DON'T CARE! I'M GONNA RING THAT JERK'S BELL!
ICHIGO ...
!?
BAM
TACKLE

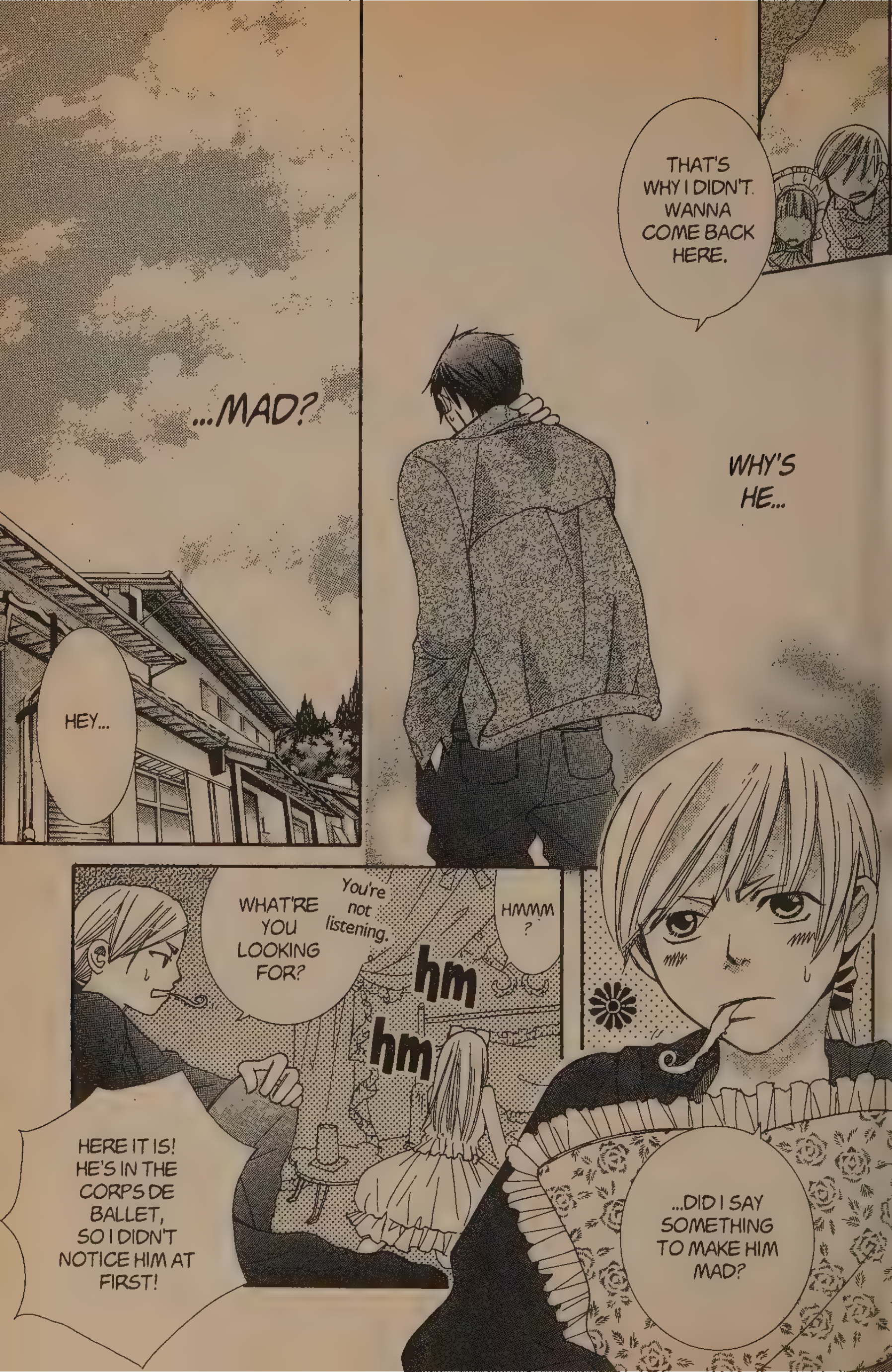

HE JUM-
BBMP
A YANKI?

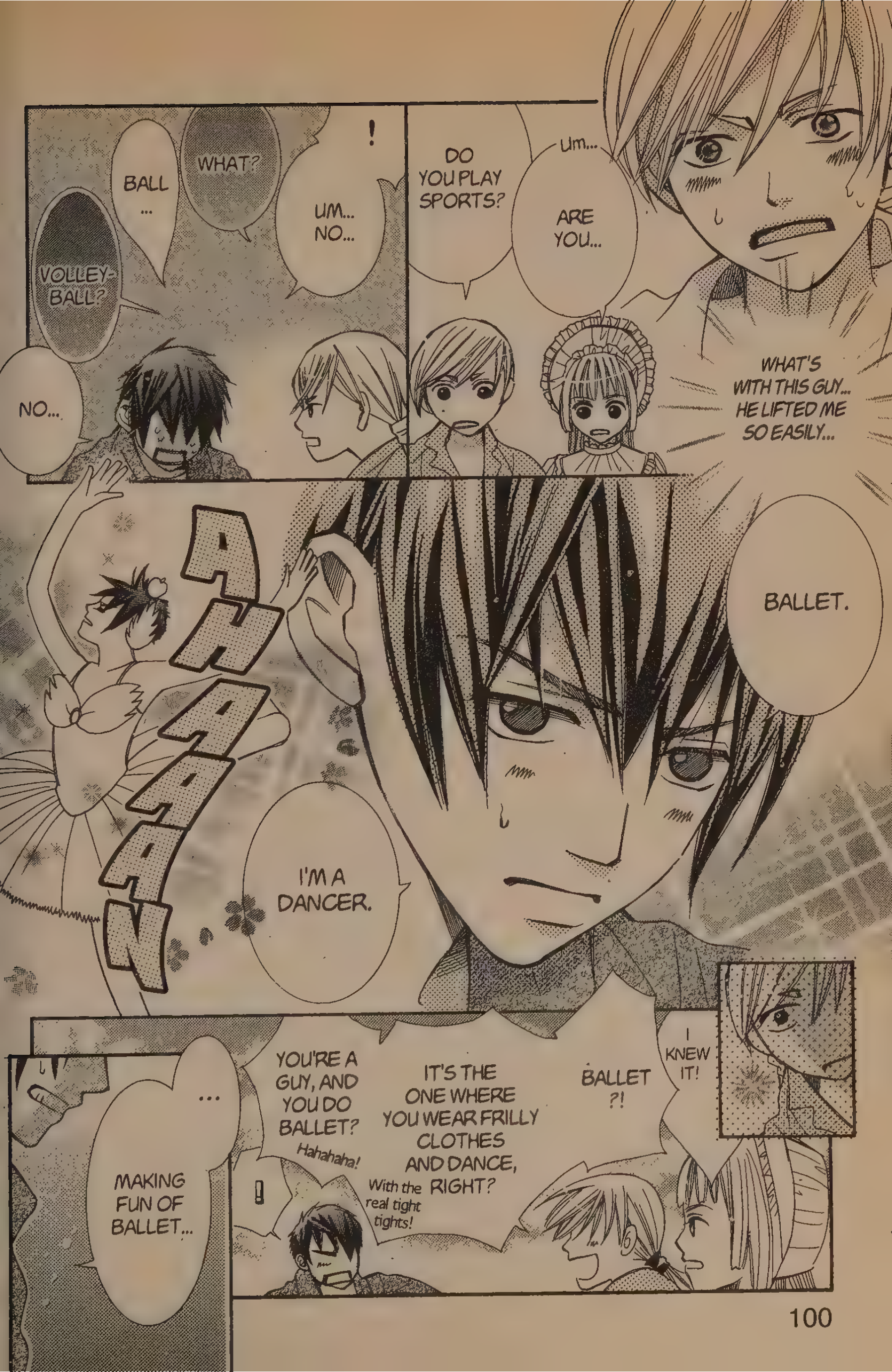

THAT SUCKS. TELL YOUR FRIEND THAT THE GUY WHO DIDN'T NOTICE HER CHARMS IS A FOOL.
YES, I'LL TELL HER THAT.
BAM
UM, THAT FOOL IS YOU...
BRRRM
B-BMP B-BMP
THE FOOL IS GONE.
!
MOMOKO, YOU...
WHAT, HE...
...REJECTED YOU?
!
ACTUALLY, SHE COULDN'T EVEN TELL HIM SHE LOVED HIM...
SLAM
HOW CAN A SAVAGE WOMAN LIKE YOU...
SQUEEZE
!
...

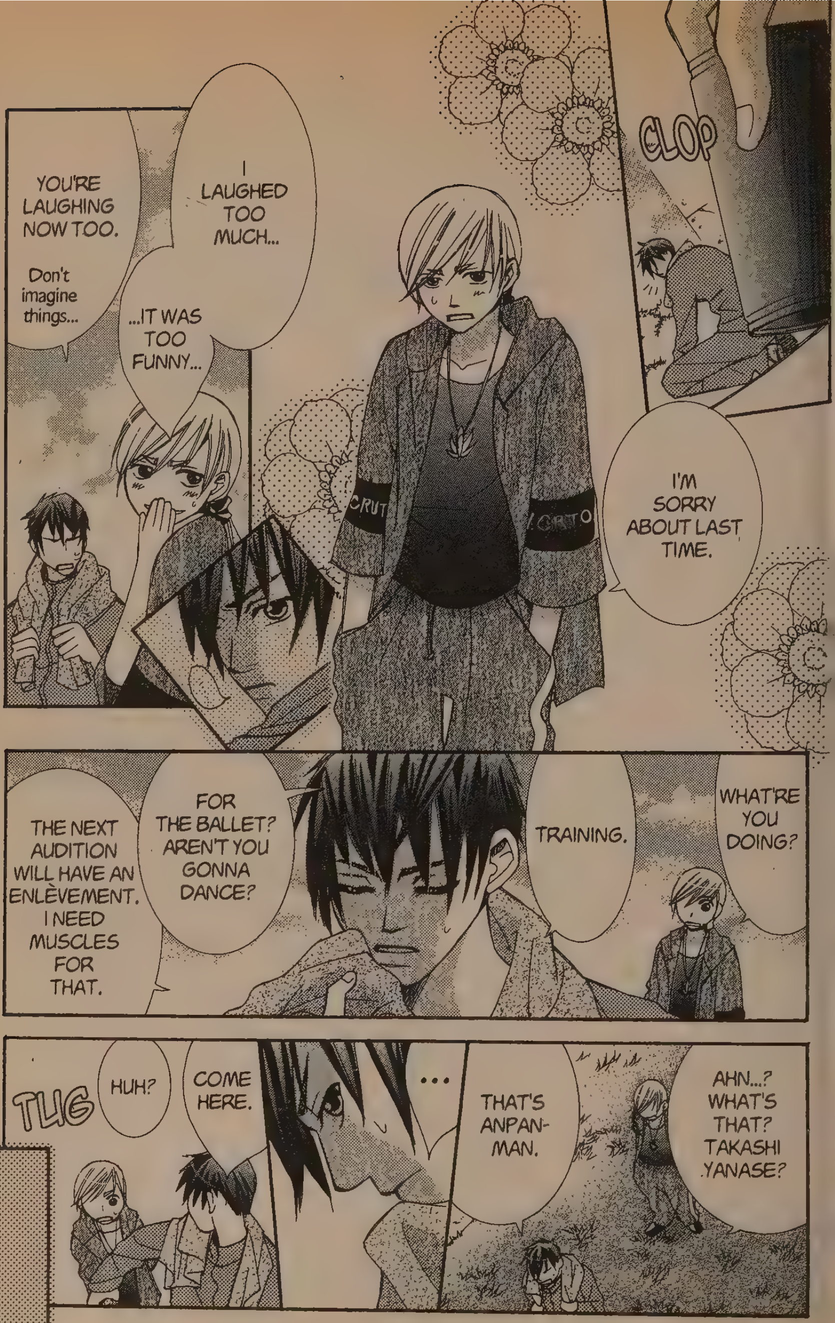

ICHIGO?
YO.
HEY, WE MEET OFTEN.
!
THE PACHINKO MAN!...UH NO...
UM...
I'M RYUJI.
...UH...
...CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR WEDDING.
YUP.
THANKS!
B-BMP
THE *NIJIKAI* IS AT THE "FOREST OF THE NOBILITY," SO PLEASE BE THERE.
YES, ICHIGO SHOWED ME THE INVITATION.
B-BMP
YOU'RE ALONE TODAY TOO. WHERE'S YOUR FRIEND?
B-BMP
SHE MAY HAVE COMMITTED SUICIDE BY THEN.
SHE'S A LITTLE DOWN, BECAUSE OF A LOST LOVE.

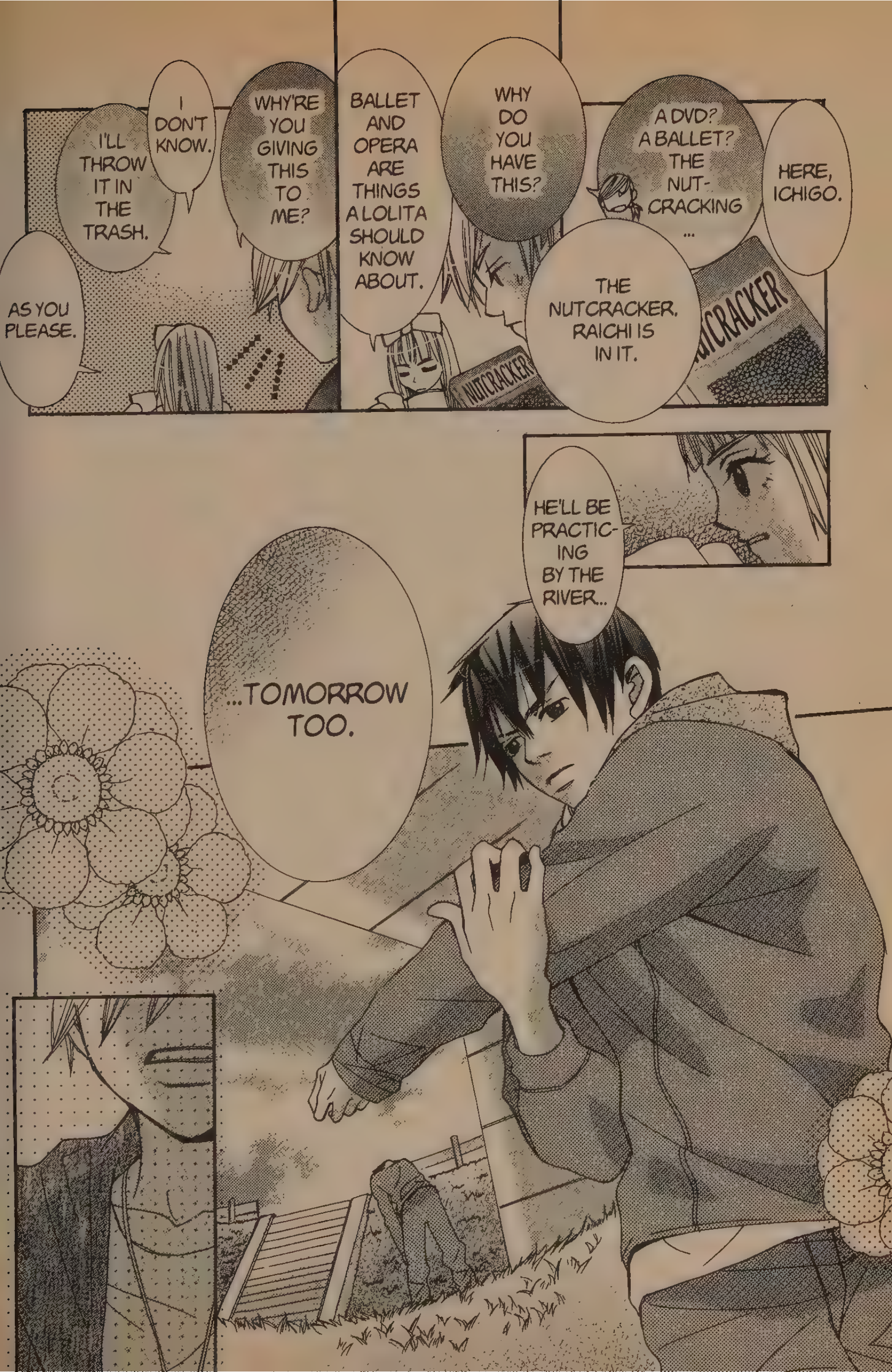

RAICHI! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT! SUCH A FRUITY NAME! TROPICAL LYCHEE!
Kera kera kera kerarino sandorovich!
SHUT UP! LYCHEE IS A VERY IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN ASIAN DESSERTS!
WHAT A STUPID CONVERSATION...
LOOK AT MY LAST NAME!
I'M RAICHI ASAZUMI, AGE 20. RYUJI IS MY...
...TWIN, MY OLDER BROTHER!
TWINS ?!
No wonder you guys look alike!
TWINS
GET UP, HE'S GONE.
HUP
!

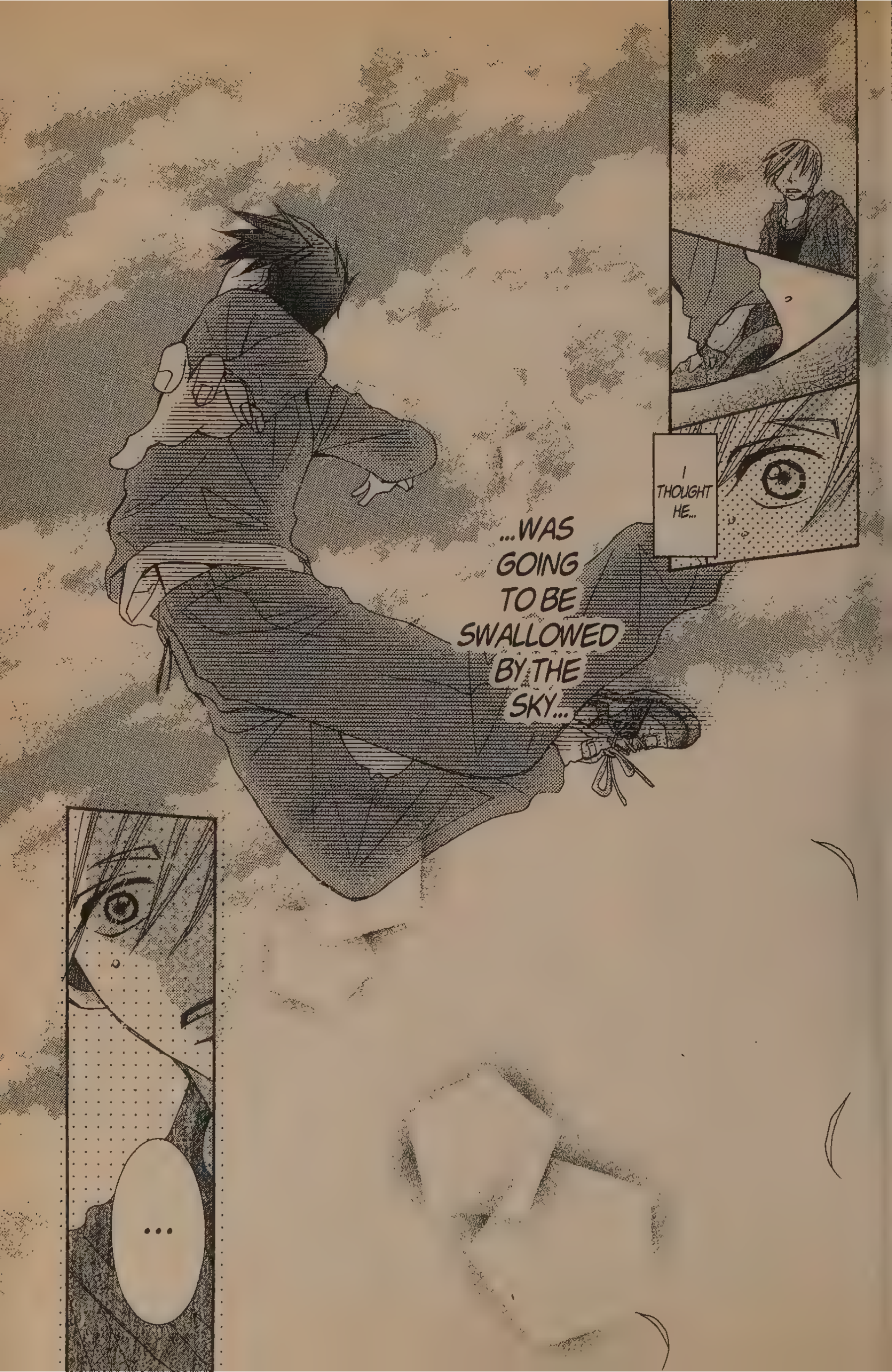

SHE GRABBED MY B...B...
STUPID!
THERE ARE NO RULES WHEN FIGHTING!
PUNCH
PAP
!
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO FOOL AROUND WITH YOU.
THIS GUY'S FACE...
...LOOKS LIKE HIS...
YOU DROPPED SOMETHING.
A card?
!
Your name is...
...RAICHI ...
...ASA-ZUMI?
4181 5978
09/08
RAICHI ASAZUMI
VISA

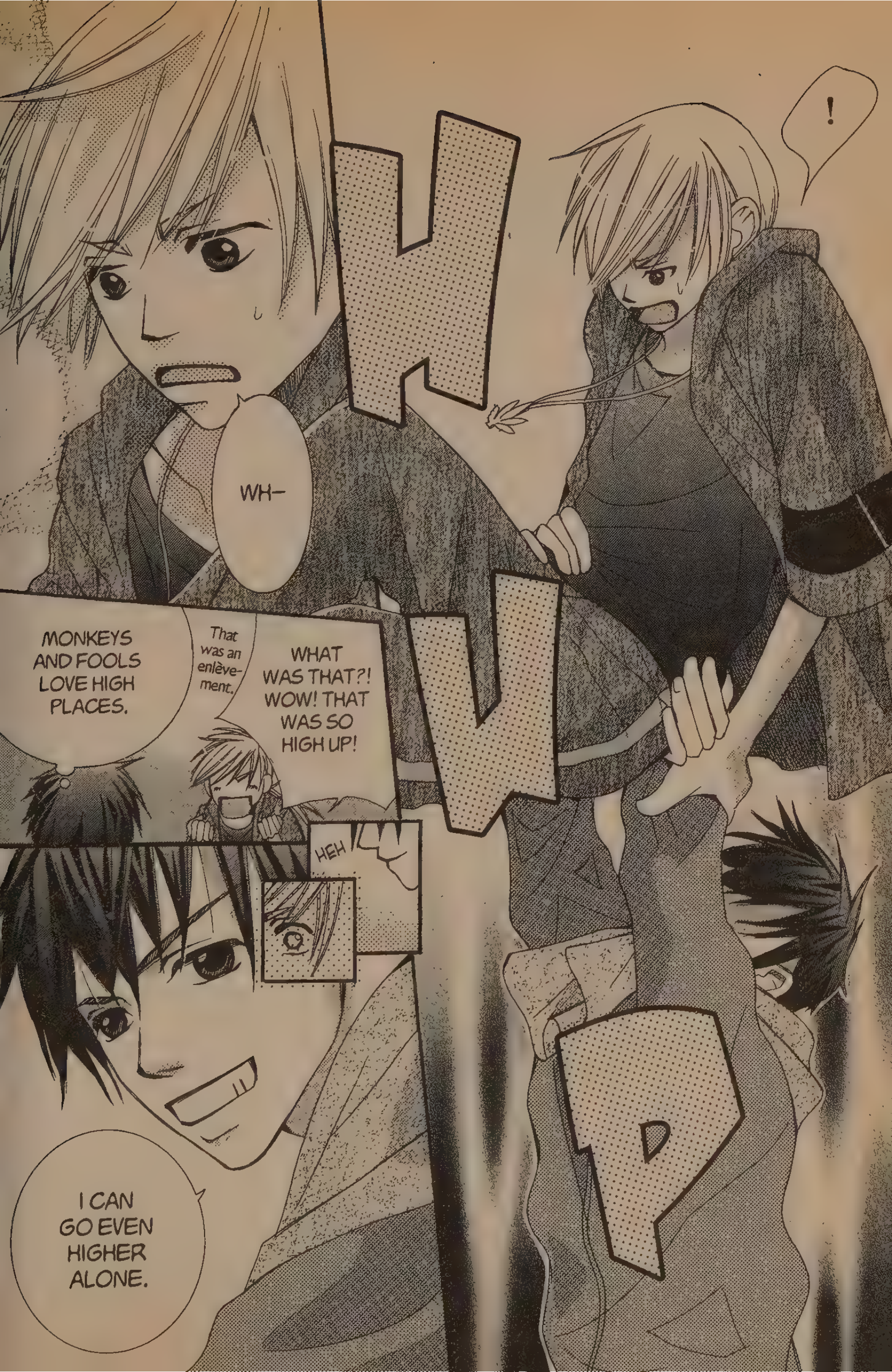

THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANNA COME BACK HERE.
WHY'S HE...
...MAD?
HEY...
...DID I SAY SOMETHING TO MAKE HIM MAD?
HMMM?
hm
hm
You're not listening.
WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING FOR?
HERE IT IS! HE'S IN THE CORPS DE BALLET, SO I DIDN'T NOTICE HIM AT FIRST!

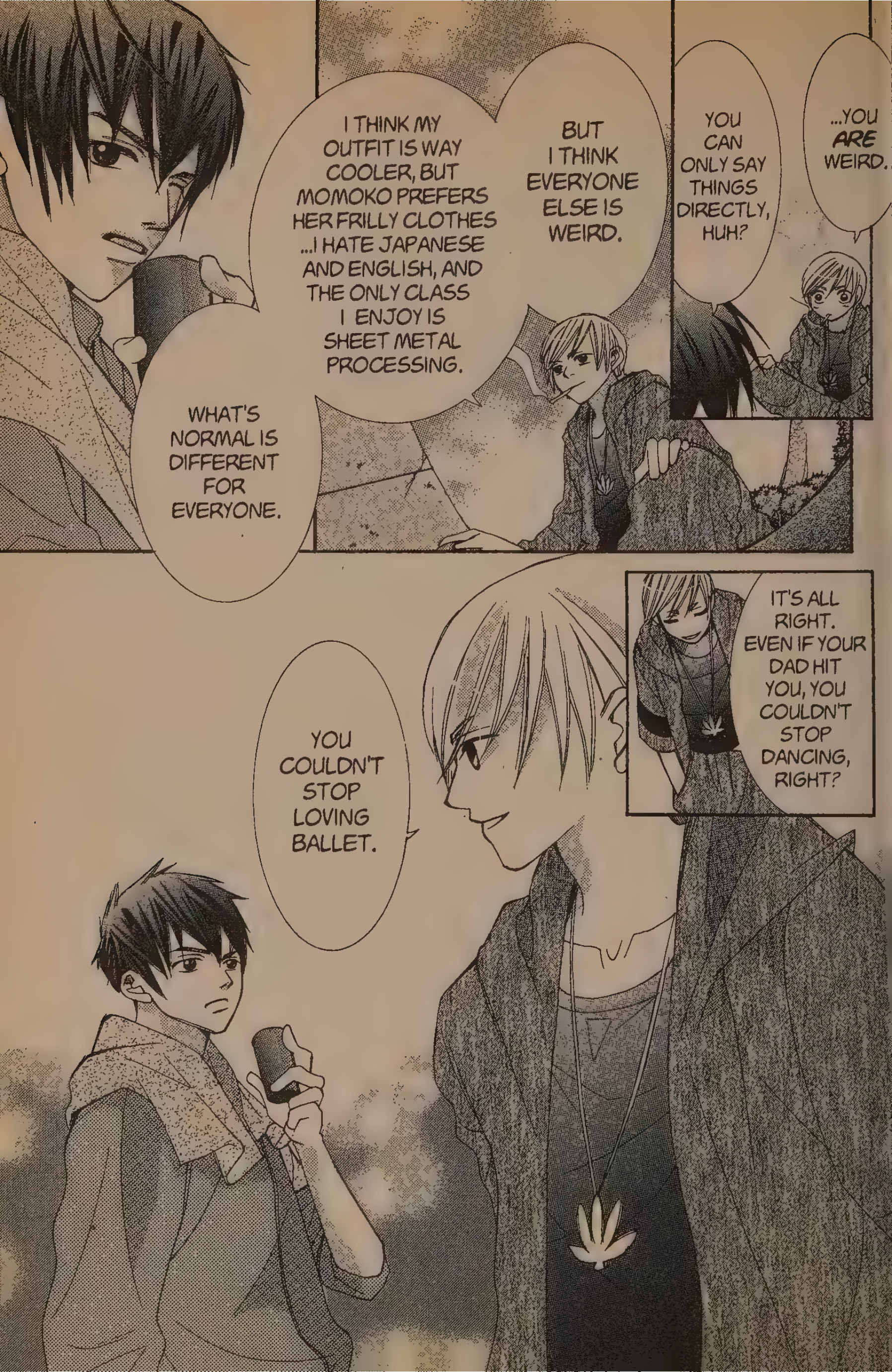

Um...
ARE YOU...
DO YOU PLAY SPORTS?
WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY... HE LIFTED ME SO EASILY...
!
UM... NO...
WHAT?
BALL...
VOLLEY-BALL?
NO...
BALLET.
I'M A DANCER.
AHAAAAN
I KNEW IT!
BALLET ?!
IT'S THE ONE WHERE YOU WEAR FRILLY CLOTHES AND DANCE, RIGHT?
With the real tight tights!
YOU'RE A GUY, AND YOU DO BALLET?
Hahahaha!
!
...
MAKING FUN OF BALLET...

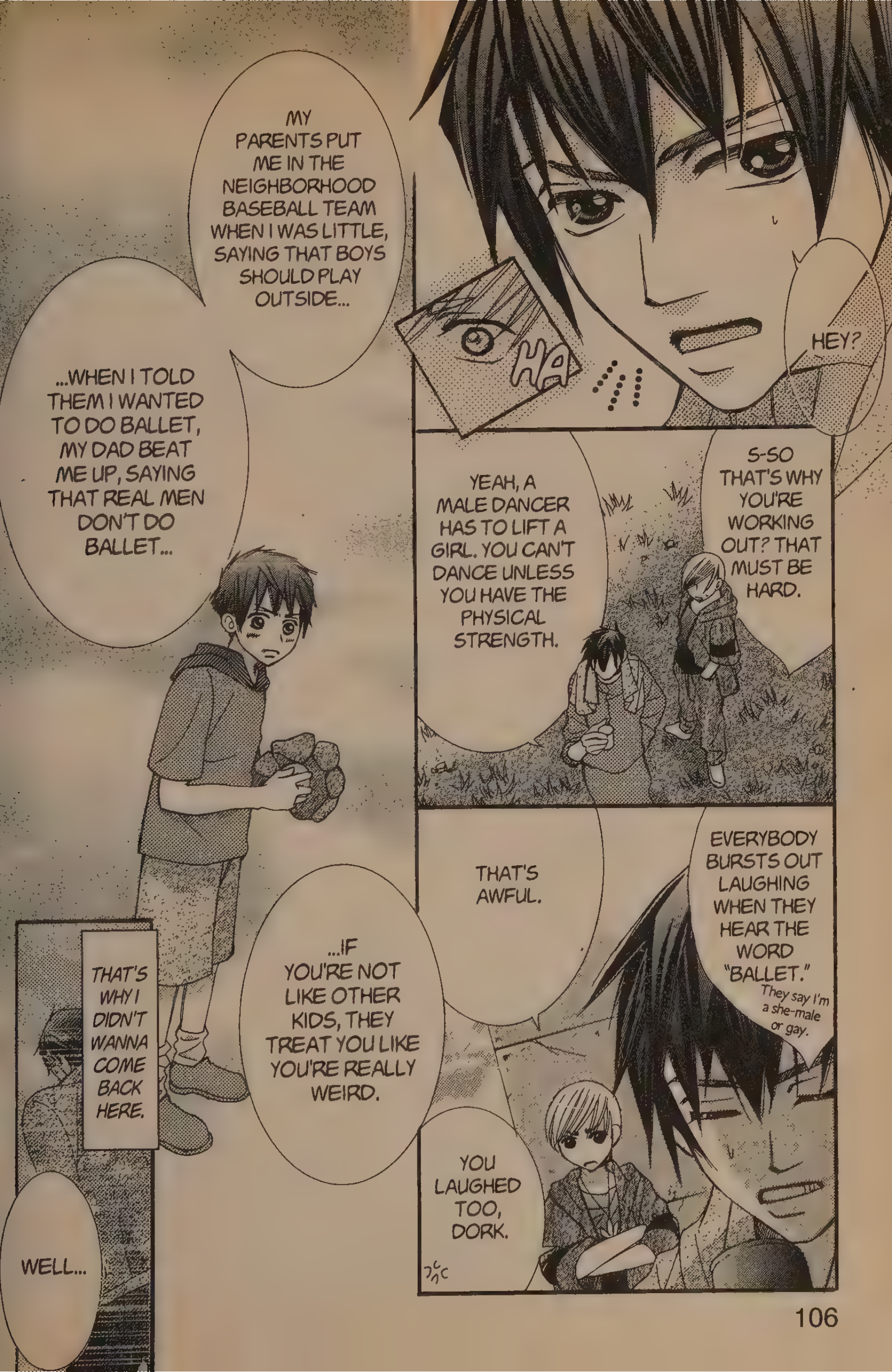

CLOP
I'M SORRY ABOUT LAST TIME.
I LAUGHED TOO MUCH...
...IT WAS TOO FUNNY...
YOU'RE LAUGHING NOW TOO.
Don't imagine things...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
TRAINING.
FOR THE BALLET? AREN'T YOU GONNA DANCE?
THE NEXT AUDITION WILL HAVE AN ENLÈVEMENT. I NEED MUSCLES FOR THAT.
AHN...? WHAT'S THAT? TAKASHI YANASE?
THAT'S ANPAN-MAN.
...
COME HERE.
HUH?
TUG

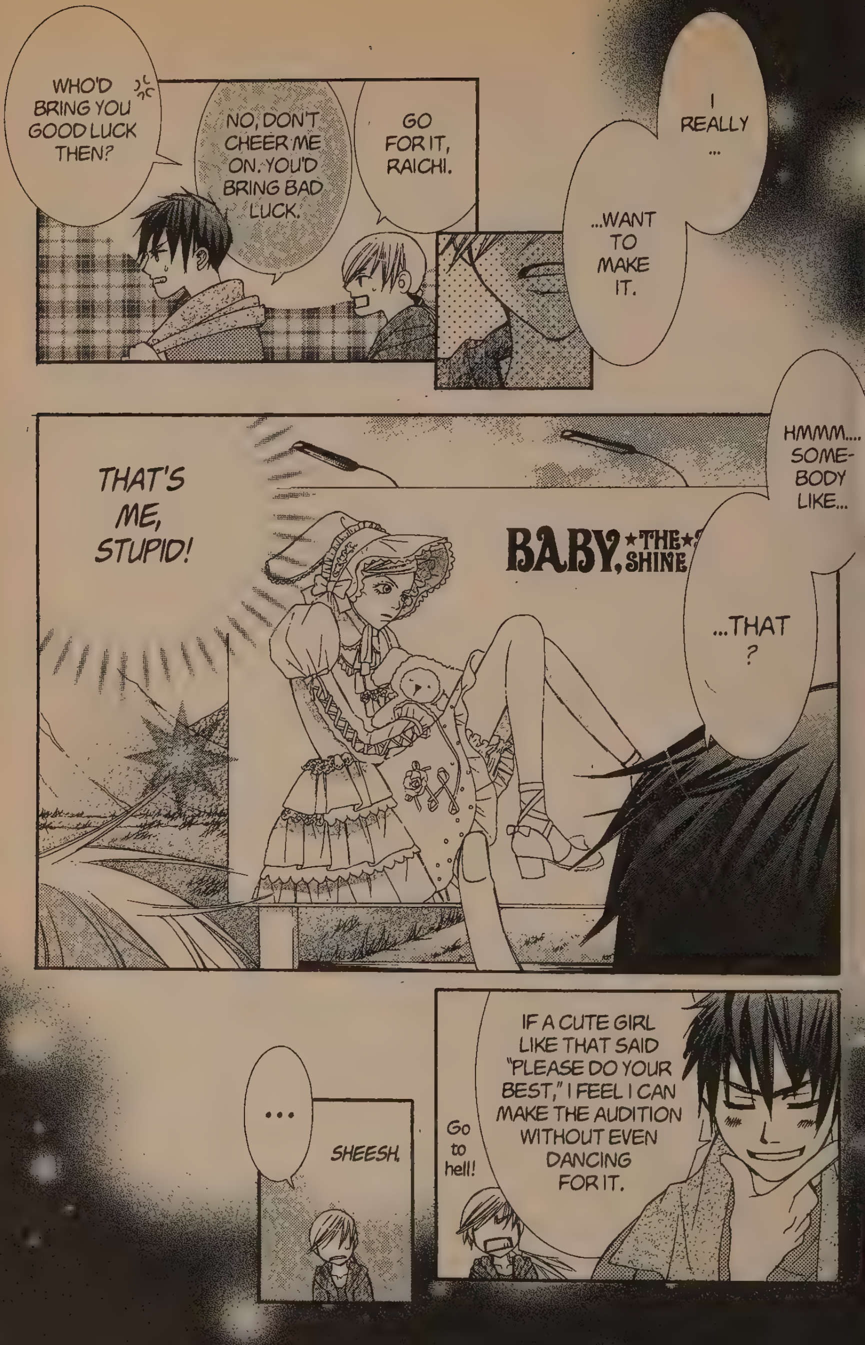

HERE, ICHIGO.
A DVD? A BALLET? THE NUT-CRACKING...
NUTCRACKER
THE NUTCRACKER. RAICHI IS IN IT.
WHY DO YOU HAVE THIS?
NUTCRACKER
BALLET AND OPERA ARE THINGS A LOLITA SHOULD KNOW ABOUT.
WHY'RE YOU GIVING THIS TO ME?
I DON'T KNOW.
I'LL THROW IT IN THE TRASH.
AS YOU PLEASE.
HE'LL BE PRACTICING BY THE RIVER...
...TOMORROW TOO.

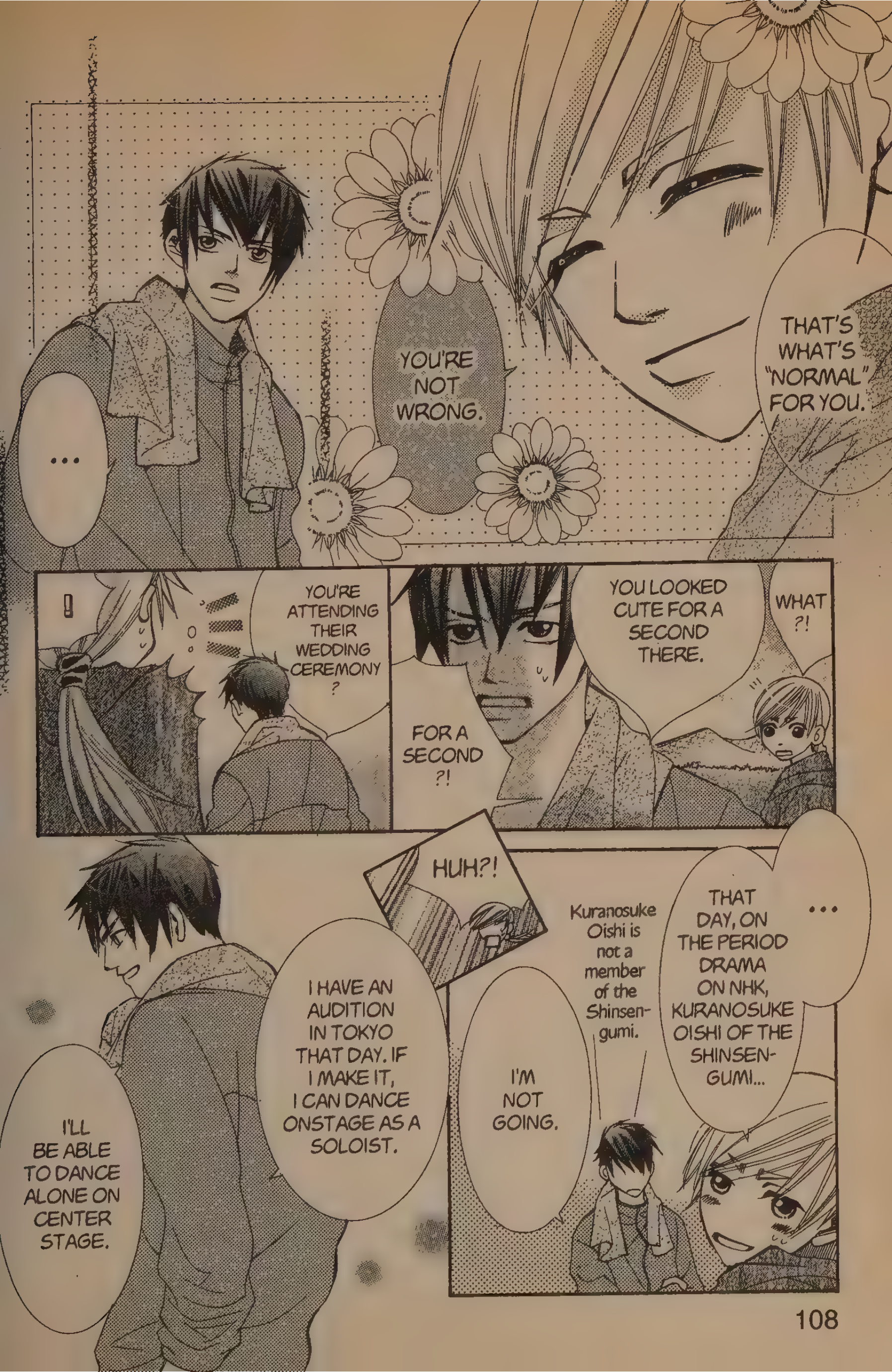

I THOUGHT HE...
...WAS GOING TO BE SWALLOWED BY THE SKY...
...

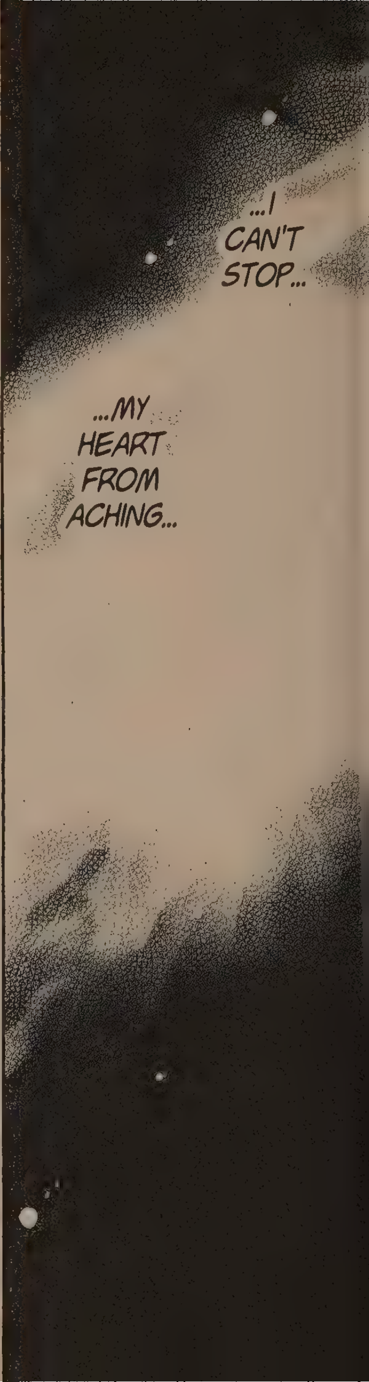

!
WH–
WHUP
WHAT WAS THAT?! WOW! THAT WAS SO HIGH UP!
That was an enlèvement.
MONKEYS AND FOOLS LOVE HIGH PLACES.
HEH
I CAN GO EVEN HIGHER ALONE.

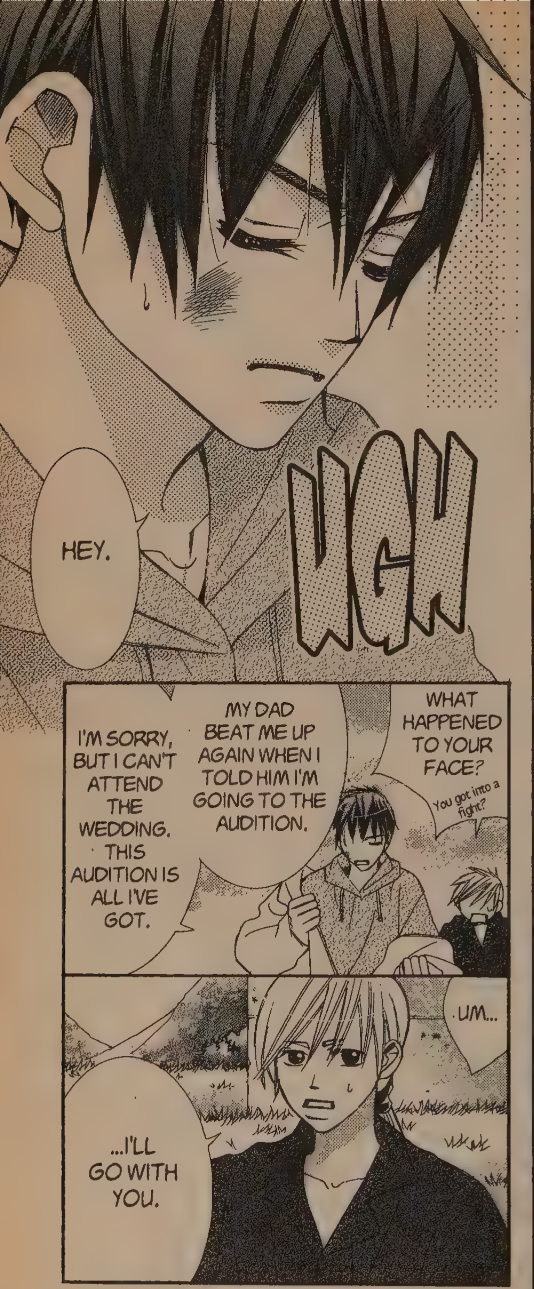

...YOU *ARE* WEIRD.
YOU CAN ONLY SAY THINGS DIRECTLY, HUH?
BUT I THINK EVERYONE ELSE IS WEIRD.
I THINK MY OUTFIT IS WAY COOLER, BUT MOMOKO PREFERS HER FRILLY CLOTHES ...I HATE JAPANESE AND ENGLISH, AND THE ONLY CLASS I ENJOY IS SHEET METAL PROCESSING.
WHAT'S NORMAL IS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. EVEN IF YOUR DAD HIT YOU, YOU COULDN'T STOP DANCING, RIGHT?
YOU COULDN'T STOP LOVING BALLET.

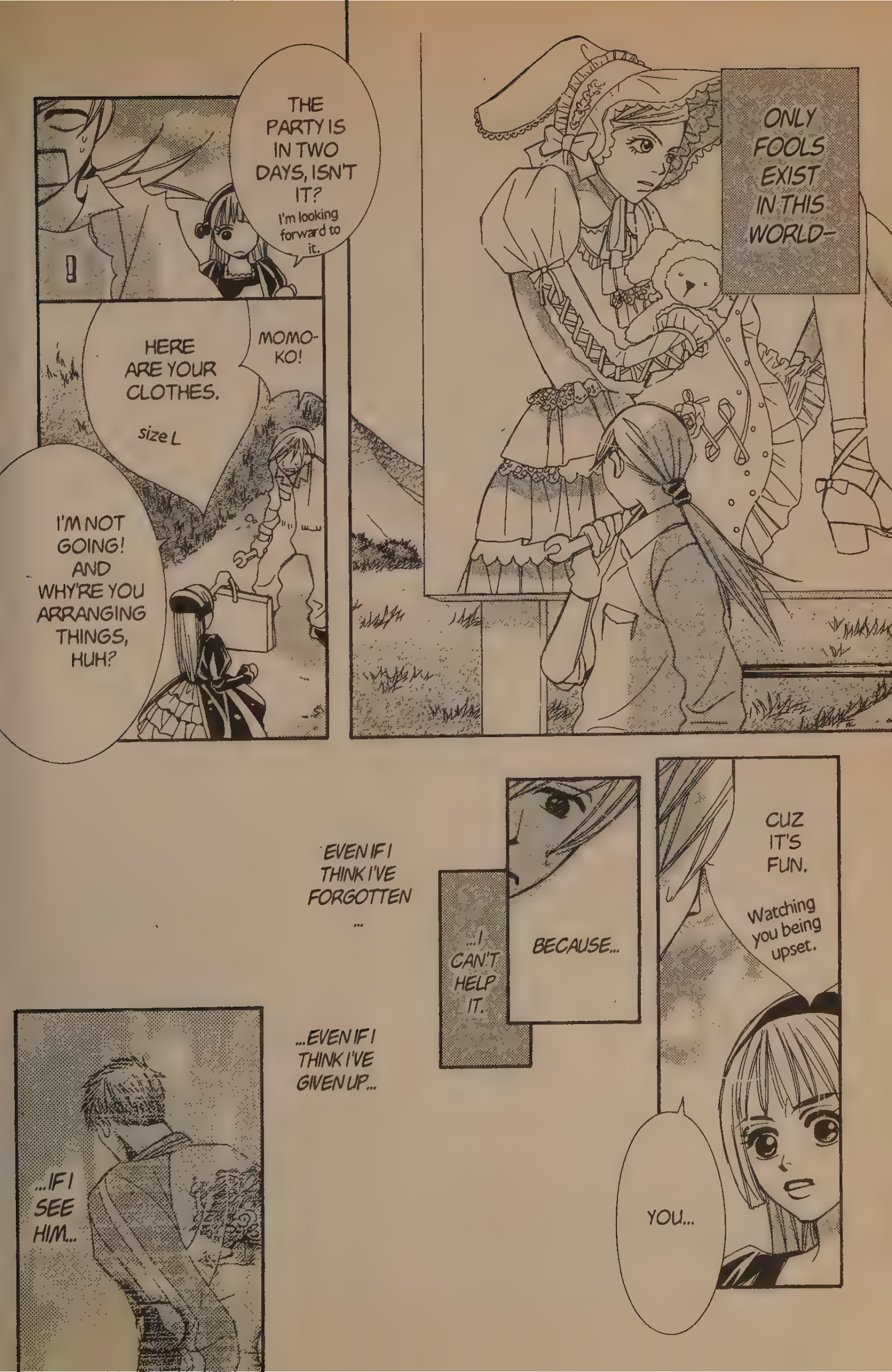

MY PARENTS PUT ME IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD BASEBALL TEAM WHEN I WAS LITTLE, SAYING THAT BOYS SHOULD PLAY OUTSIDE...
...WHEN I TOLD THEM I WANTED TO DO BALLET, MY DAD BEAT ME UP, SAYING THAT REAL MEN DON'T DO BALLET...
HEY?
HA
S-SO THAT'S WHY YOU'RE WORKING OUT? THAT MUST BE HARD.
YEAH, A MALE DANCER HAS TO LIFT A GIRL. YOU CAN'T DANCE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
EVERYBODY BURSTS OUT LAUGHING WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD "BALLET."
They say I'm a she-male or gay.
THAT'S AWFUL.
...IF YOU'RE NOT LIKE OTHER KIDS, THEY TREAT YOU LIKE YOU'RE REALLY WEIRD.
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANNA COME BACK HERE.
YOU LAUGHED TOO, DORK.
WELL...

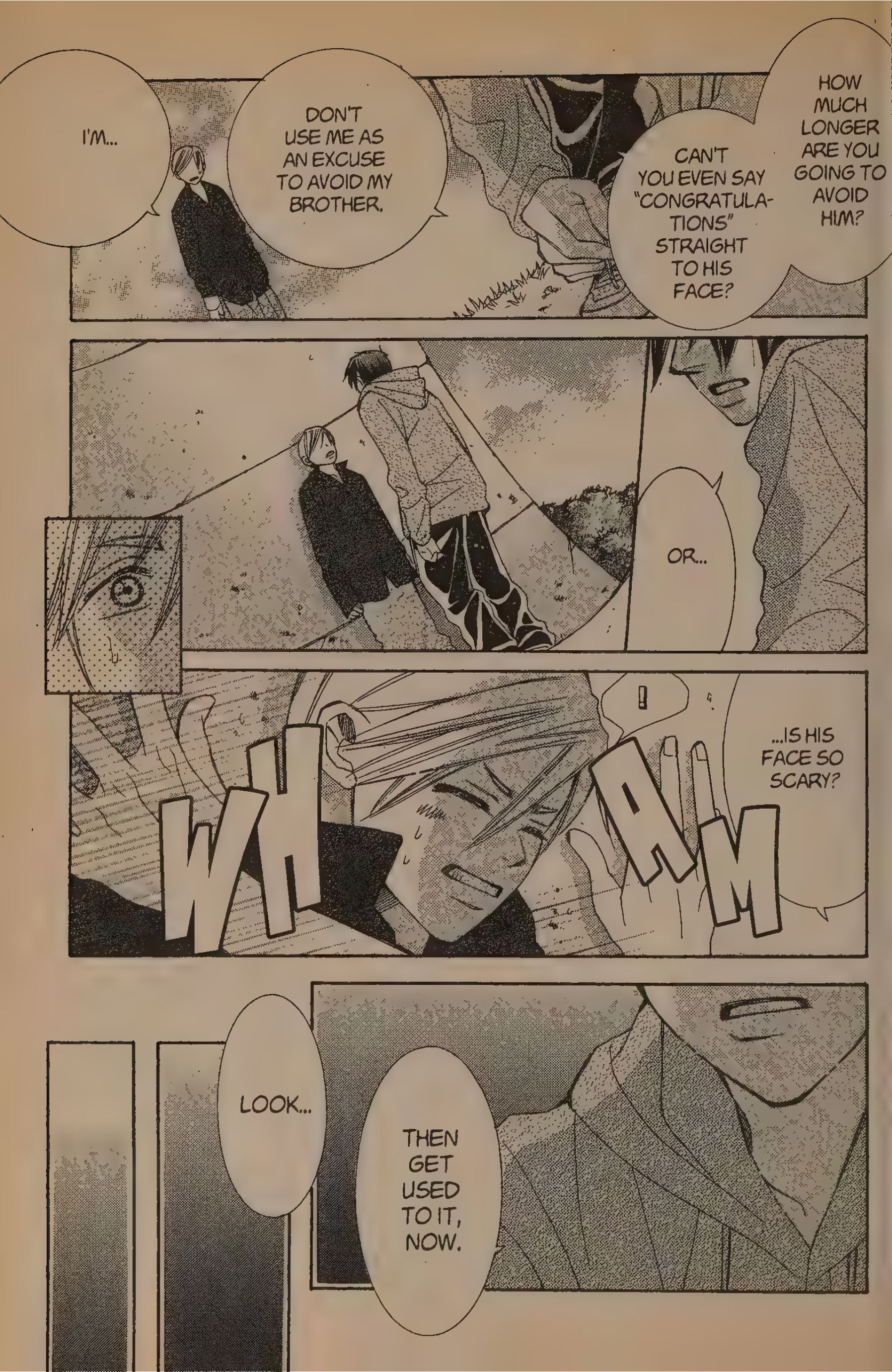

I REALLY...
...WANT TO MAKE IT.
GO FOR IT, RAICHI.
NO, DON'T CHEER ME ON. YOU'D BRING BAD LUCK.
WHO'D BRING YOU GOOD LUCK THEN?
HMMM.... SOMEBODY LIKE...
...THAT?
BABY, ★THE★ SHINE
THAT'S ME, STUPID!
IF A CUTE GIRL LIKE THAT SAID "PLEASE DO YOUR BEST," I FEEL I CAN MAKE THE AUDITION WITHOUT EVEN DANCING FOR IT.
Go to hell!
SHEESH.
...

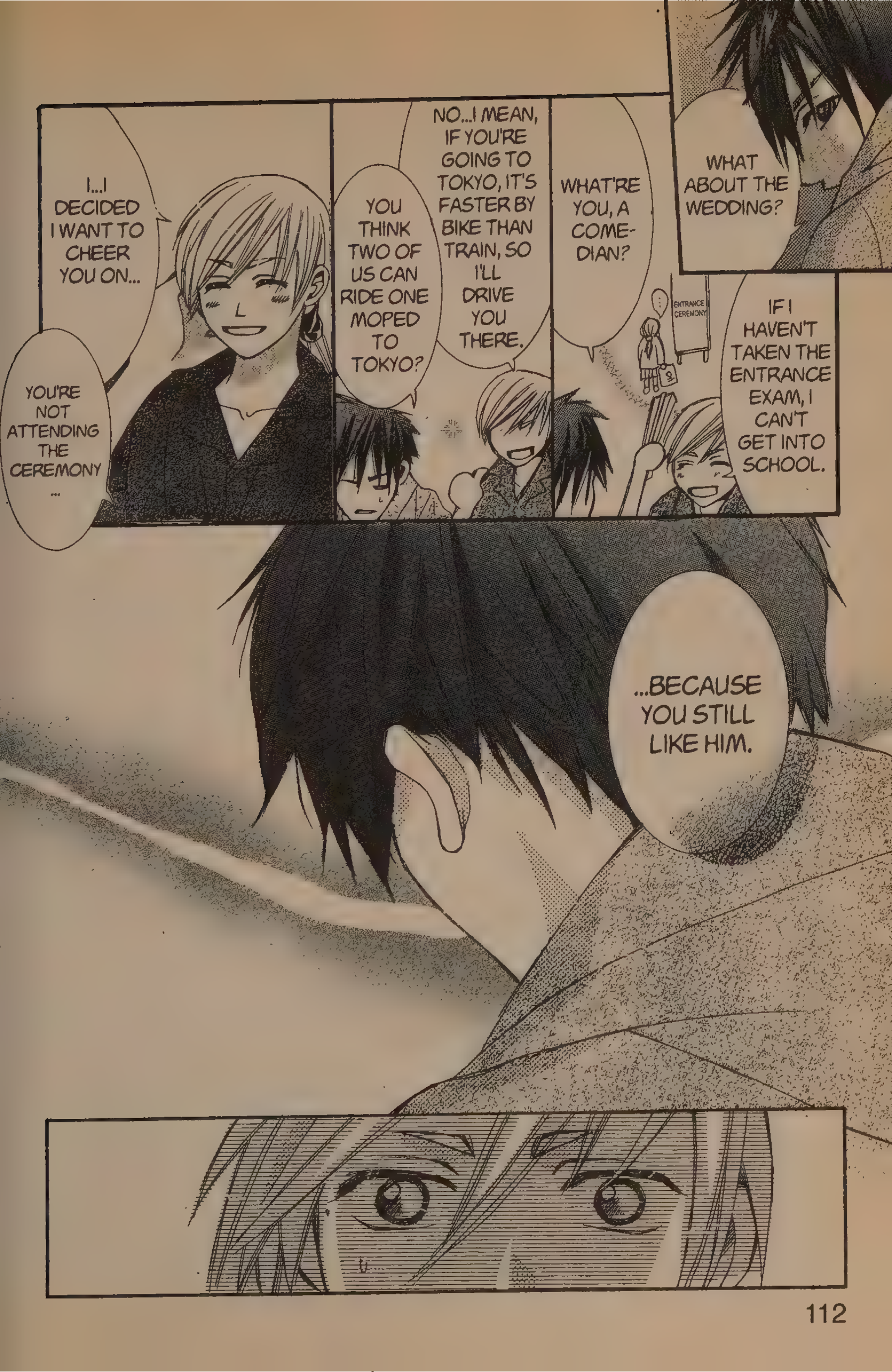

THAT'S WHAT'S "NORMAL" FOR YOU.
YOU'RE NOT WRONG.
...
WHAT ?!
YOU LOOKED CUTE FOR A SECOND THERE.
FOR A SECOND ?!
!
YOU'RE ATTENDING THEIR WEDDING CEREMONY ?
...
THAT DAY, ON THE PERIOD DRAMA ON NHK, KURANOSUKE OISHI OF THE SHINSEN-GUMI...
Kuranosuke Oishi is not a member of the Shinsengumi.
HUH?!
I'M NOT GOING.
I HAVE AN AUDITION IN TOKYO THAT DAY. IF I MAKE IT, I CAN DANCE ONSTAGE AS A SOLOIST.
I'LL BE ABLE TO DANCE ALONE ON CENTER STAGE.

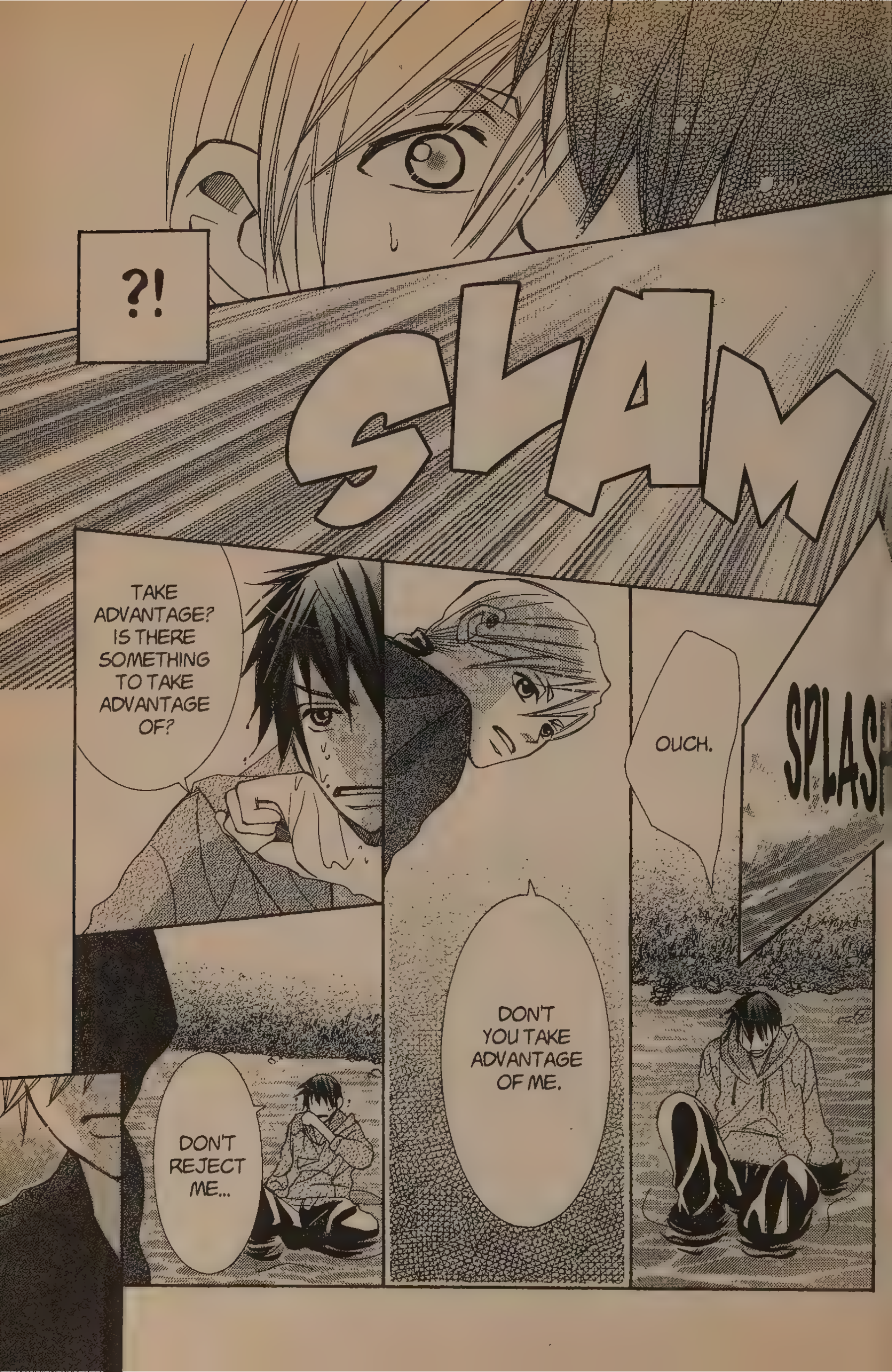

...I CAN'T STOP...
...MY HEART FROM ACHING...

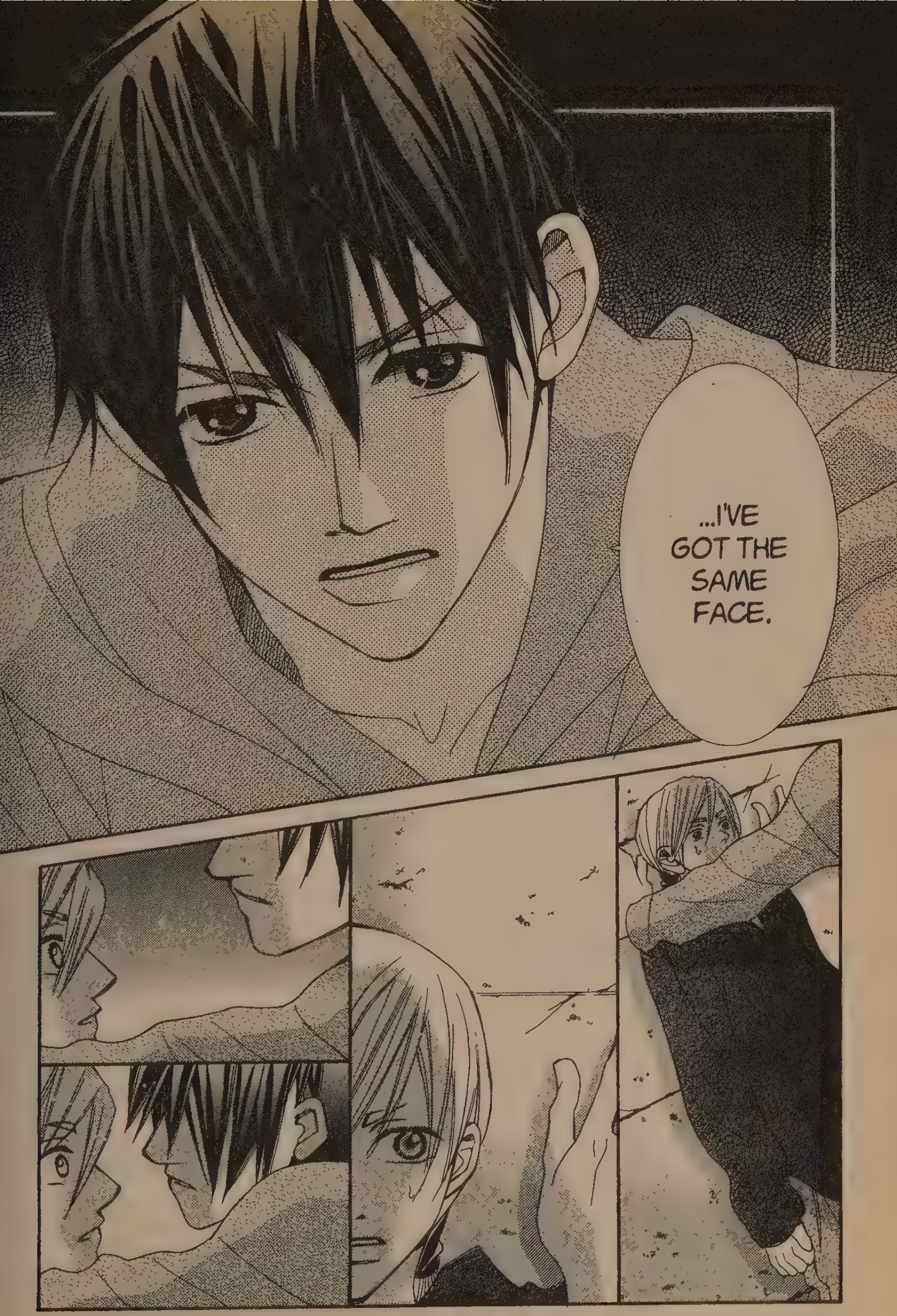

UGH
HEY.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE?
You got into a fight?
MY DAD BEAT ME UP AGAIN WHEN I TOLD HIM I'M GOING TO THE AUDITION.
I'M SORRY, BUT I CAN'T ATTEND THE WEDDING. THIS AUDITION IS ALL I'VE GOT.
UM...
...I'LL GO WITH YOU.

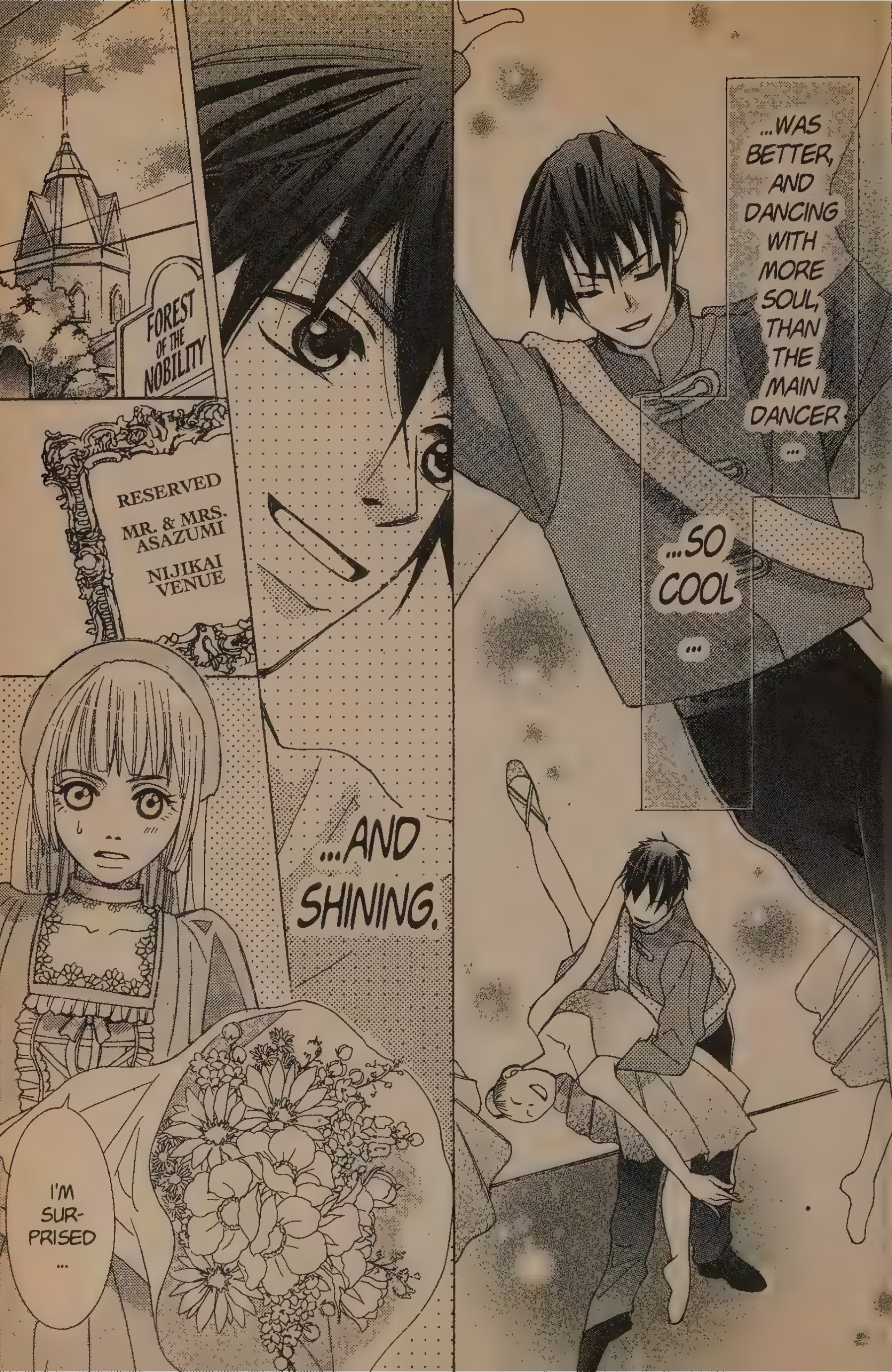

ONLY FOOLS EXIST IN THIS WORLD-
!
THE PARTY IS IN TWO DAYS, ISN'T IT? I'm looking forward to it.
MOMO-KO!
HERE ARE YOUR CLOTHES. size L
I'M NOT GOING! AND WHY'RE YOU ARRANGING THINGS, HUH?
CUZ IT'S FUN. Watching you being upset.
YOU...
BECAUSE...
...I CAN'T HELP IT.
EVEN IF I THINK I'VE FORGOTTEN...
...EVEN IF I THINK I'VE GIVEN UP...
...IF I SEE HIM...

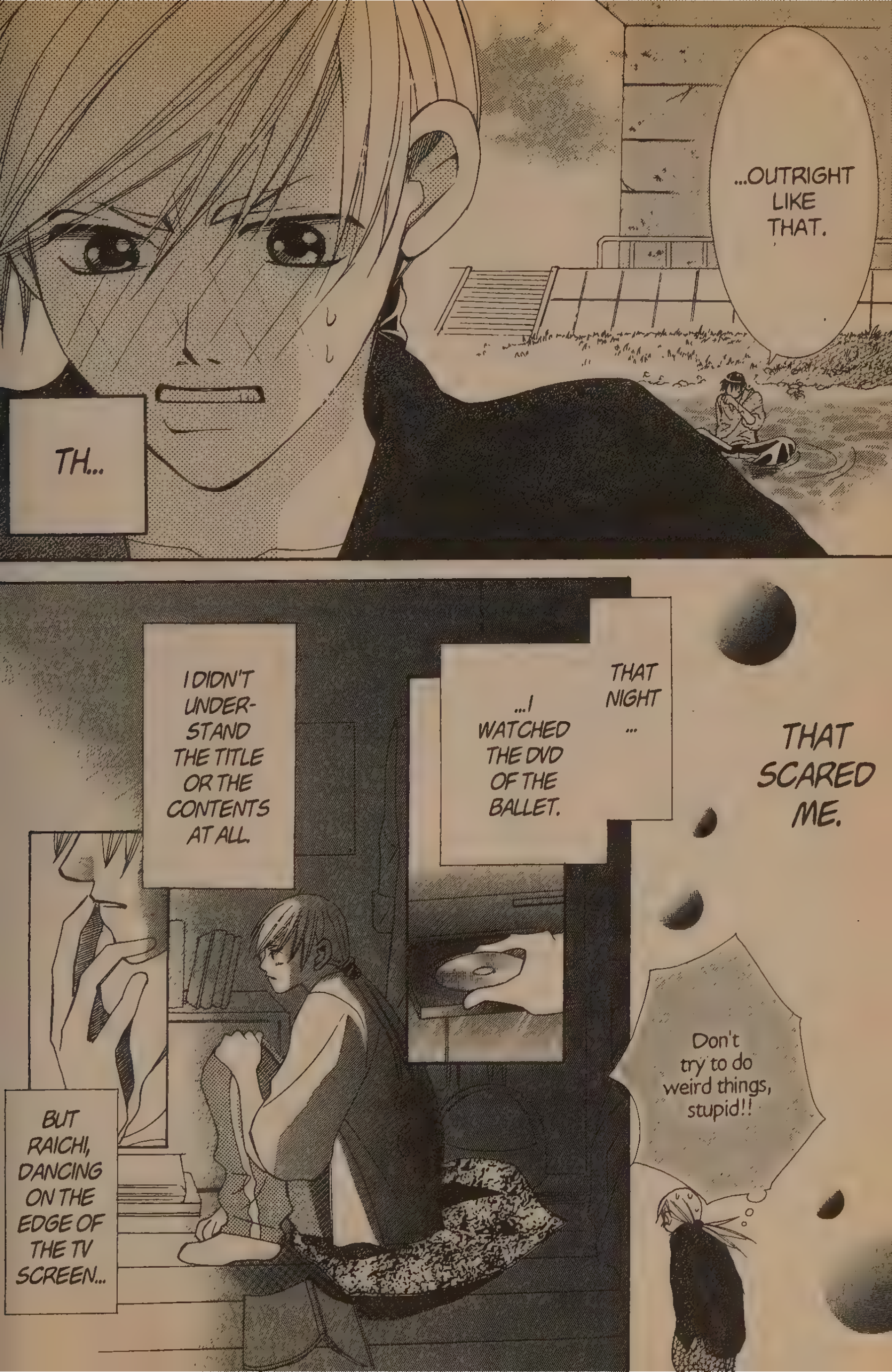

HOW MUCH LONGER ARE YOU GOING TO AVOID HIM?
CAN'T YOU EVEN SAY "CONGRATULATIONS" STRAIGHT TO HIS FACE?
DON'T USE ME AS AN EXCUSE TO AVOID MY BROTHER.
I'M...
OR...
...IS HIS FACE SO SCARY?
!
WHAM
THEN GET USED TO IT, NOW.
LOOK...

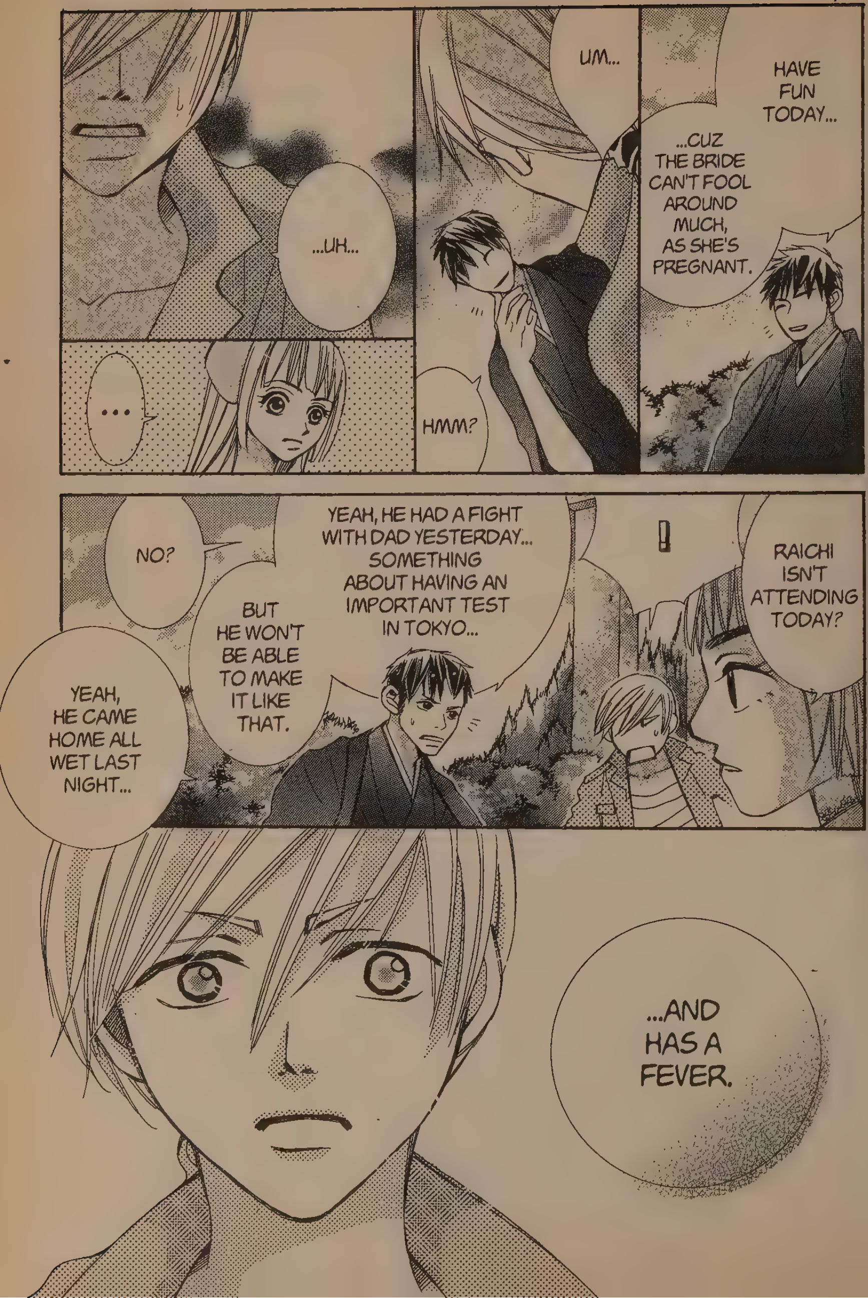

WHAT ABOUT THE WEDDING?
IF I HAVEN'T TAKEN THE ENTRANCE EXAM, I CAN'T GET INTO SCHOOL.
ENTRANCE CEREMONY
WHAT'RE YOU, A COMEDIAN?
NO...I MEAN, IF YOU'RE GOING TO TOKYO, IT'S FASTER BY BIKE THAN TRAIN, SO I'LL DRIVE YOU THERE.
YOU THINK TWO OF US CAN RIDE ONE MOPED TO TOKYO?
I...I DECIDED I WANT TO CHEER YOU ON...
YOU'RE NOT ATTENDING THE CEREMONY...
...BECAUSE YOU STILL LIKE HIM.

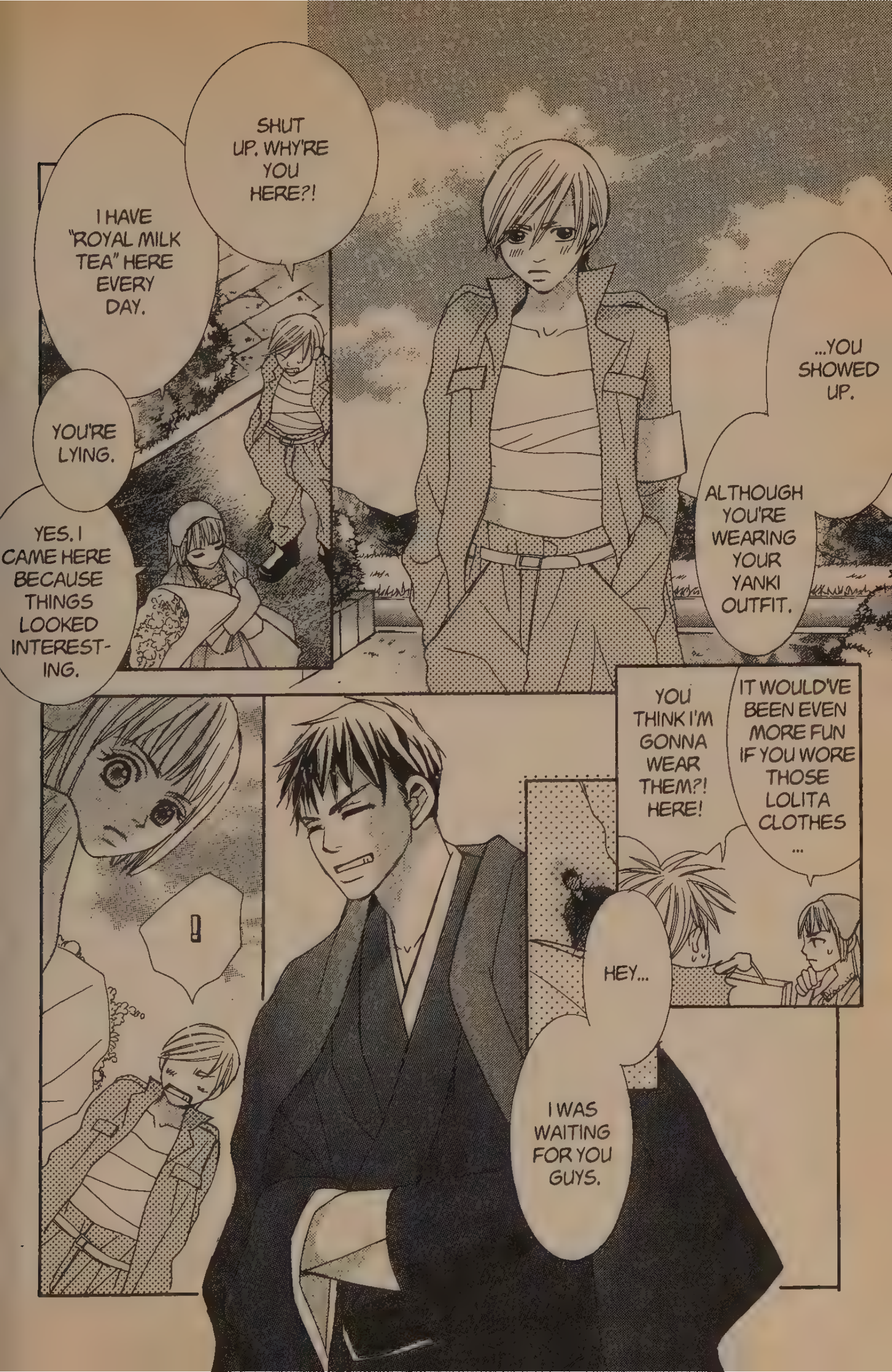

?!
SLAM
SPLAS
OUCH.
DON'T YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME.
TAKE ADVANTAGE? IS THERE SOMETHING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF?
DON'T REJECT ME...

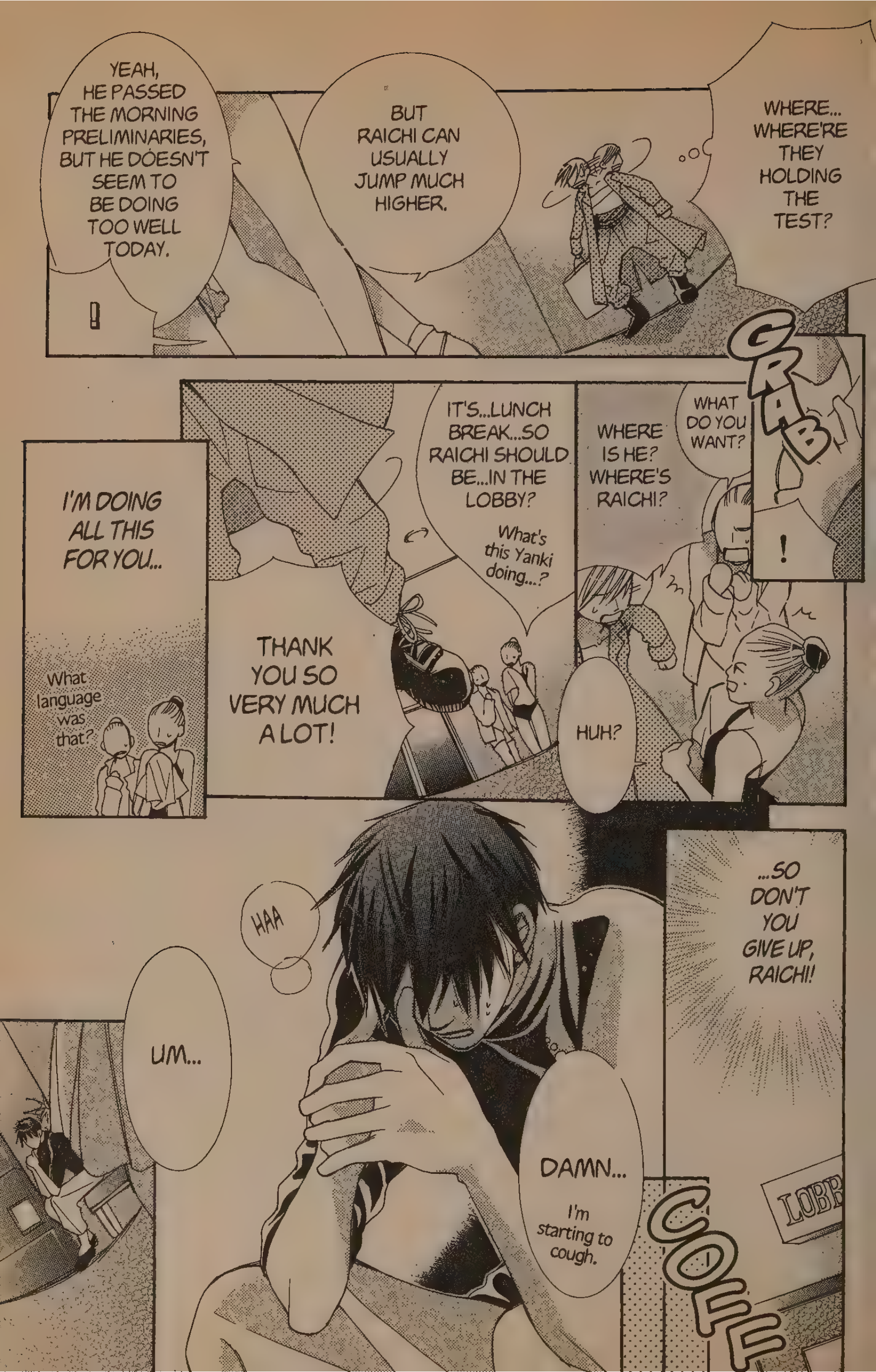

...I'VE GOT THE SAME FACE.

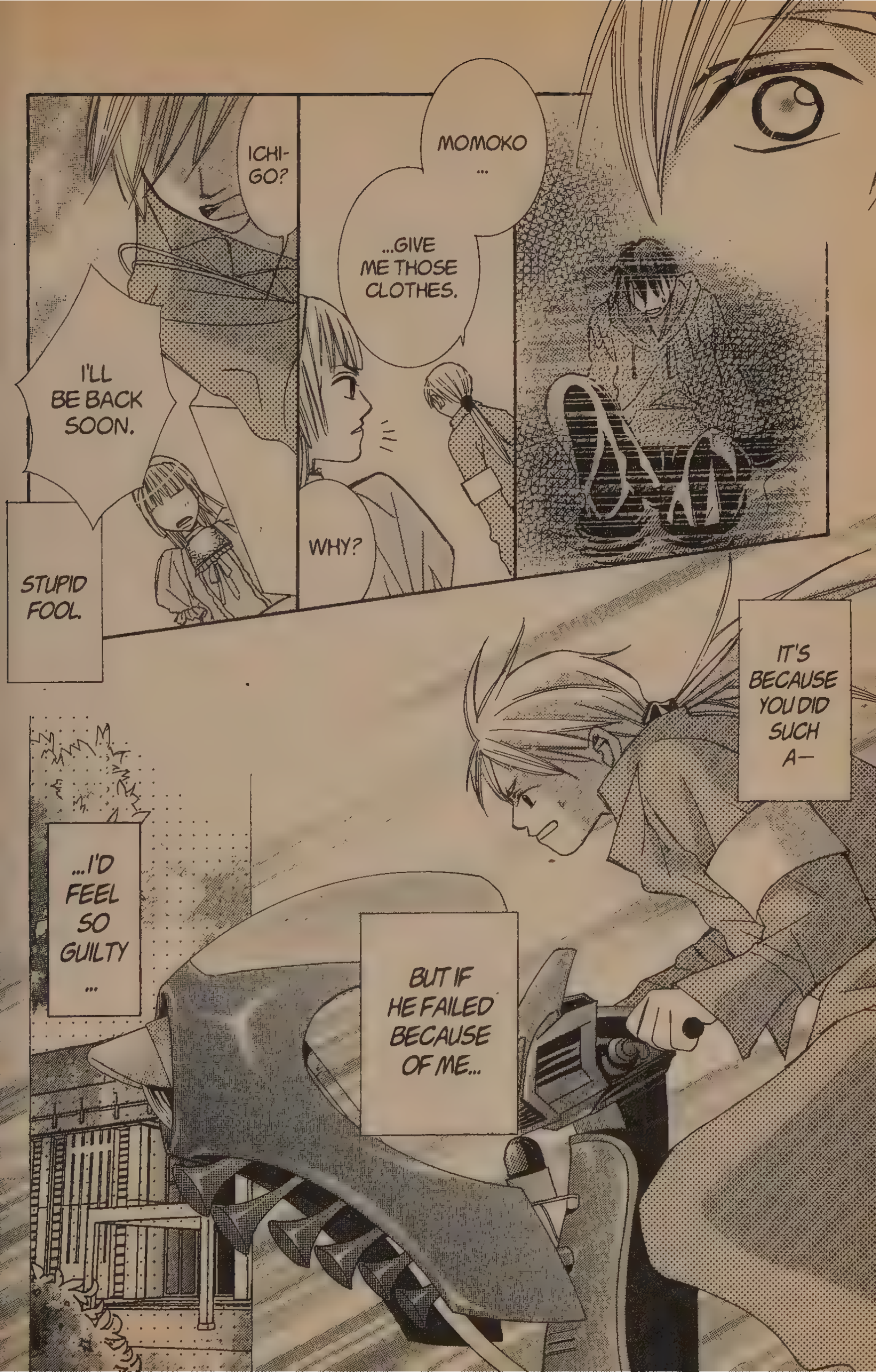

...WAS BETTER, AND DANCING WITH MORE SOUL, THAN THE MAIN DANCER...
...SO COOL...
FOREST OF THE NOBILITY
RESERVED MR. & MRS. ASAZUMI NIJIKAI VENUE
...AND SHINING.
I'M SURPRISED...

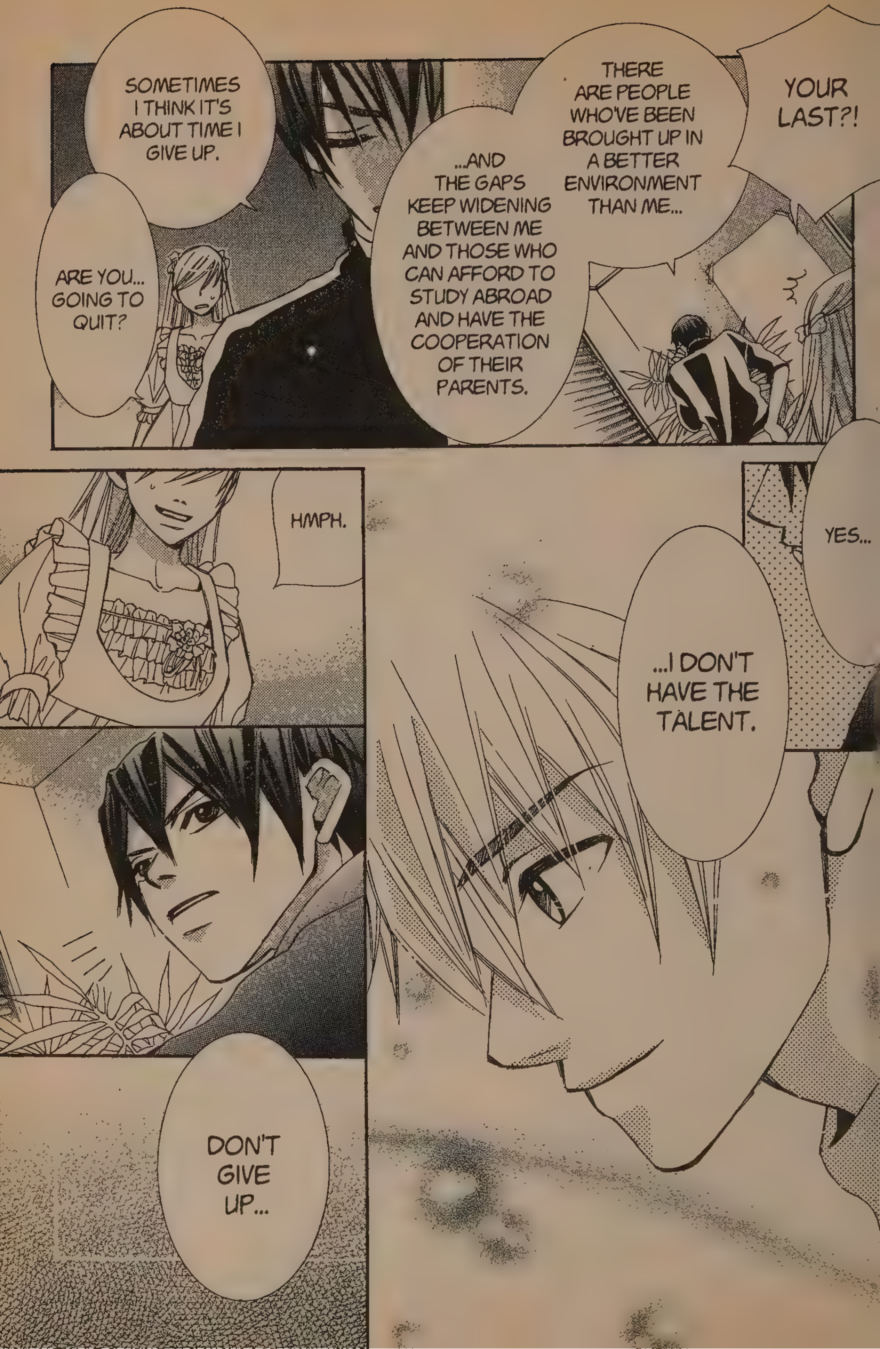

...OUTRIGHT LIKE THAT.
TH...
THAT SCARED ME.
THAT NIGHT...
...I WATCHED THE DVD OF THE BALLET.
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE TITLE OR THE CONTENTS AT ALL.
Don't try to do weird things, stupid!!
BUT RAICHI, DANCING ON THE EDGE OF THE TV SCREEN...

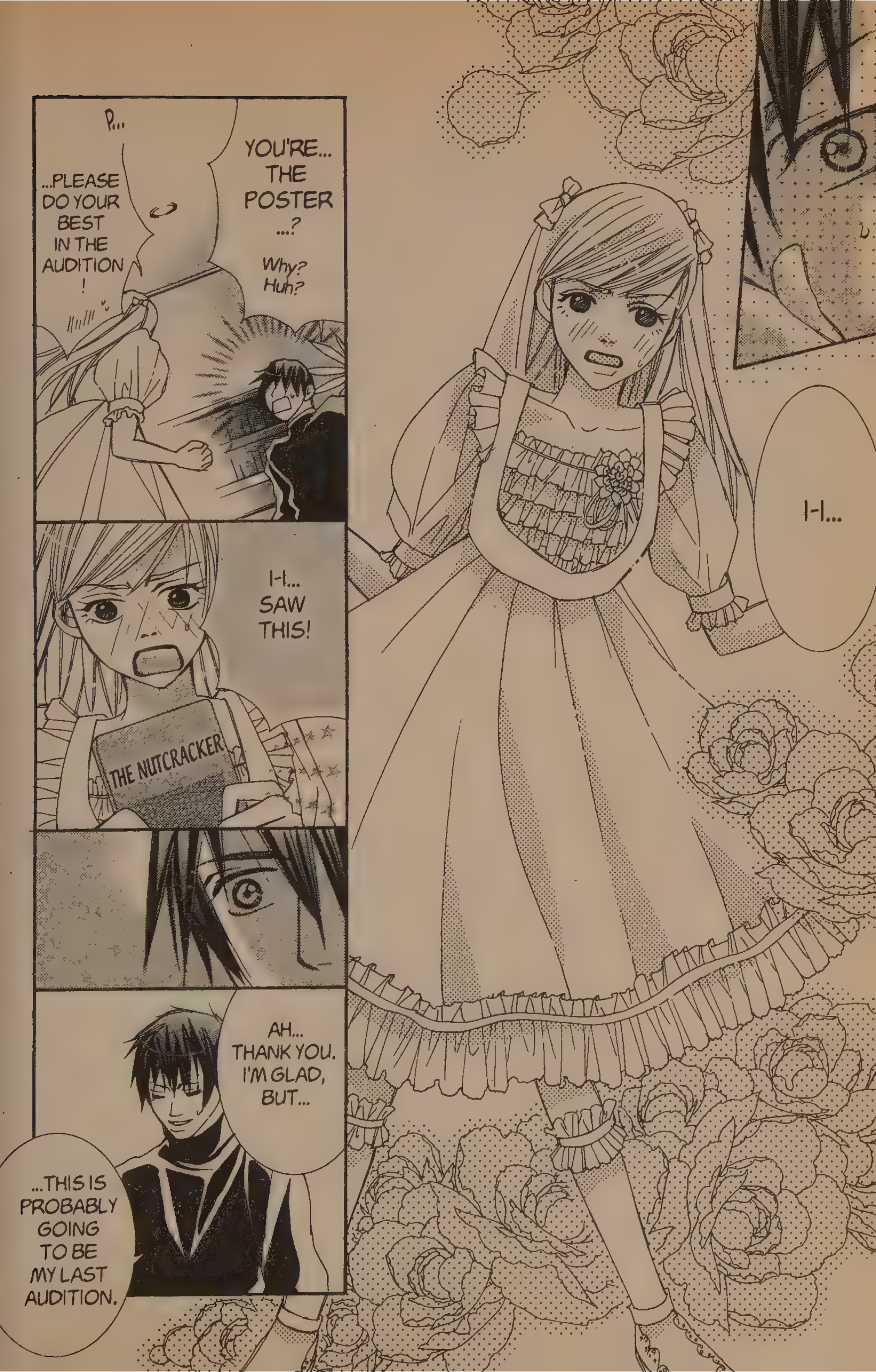

HAVE FUN TODAY...
...CUZ THE BRIDE CAN'T FOOL AROUND MUCH, AS SHE'S PREGNANT.
UM...
HMM?
...UH...
...
RAICHI ISN'T ATTENDING TODAY?
!
YEAH, HE HAD A FIGHT WITH DAD YESTERDAY... SOMETHING ABOUT HAVING AN IMPORTANT TEST IN TOKYO...
BUT HE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE IT LIKE THAT.
NO?
YEAH, HE CAME HOME ALL WET LAST NIGHT...
...AND HAS A FEVER.

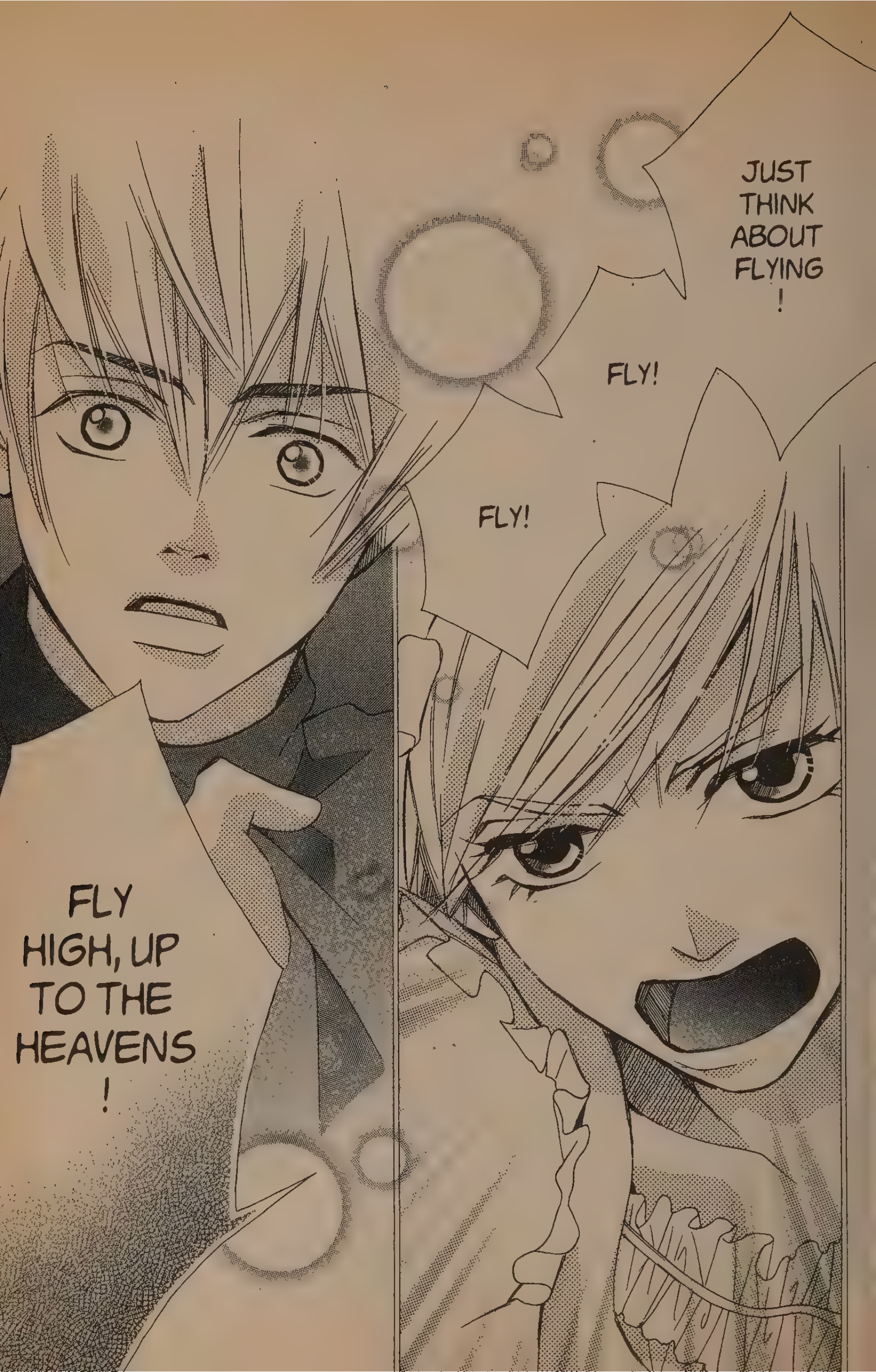

...YOU SHOWED UP.
ALTHOUGH YOU'RE WEARING YOUR YANKI OUTFIT.
SHUT UP. WHY'RE YOU HERE?!
I HAVE "ROYAL MILK TEA" HERE EVERY DAY.
YOU'RE LYING.
YES. I CAME HERE BECAUSE THINGS LOOKED INTERESTING.
IT WOULD'VE BEEN EVEN MORE FUN IF YOU WORE THOSE LOLITA CLOTHES...
YOU THINK I'M GONNA WEAR THEM?! HERE!
HEY...
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU GUYS.
!

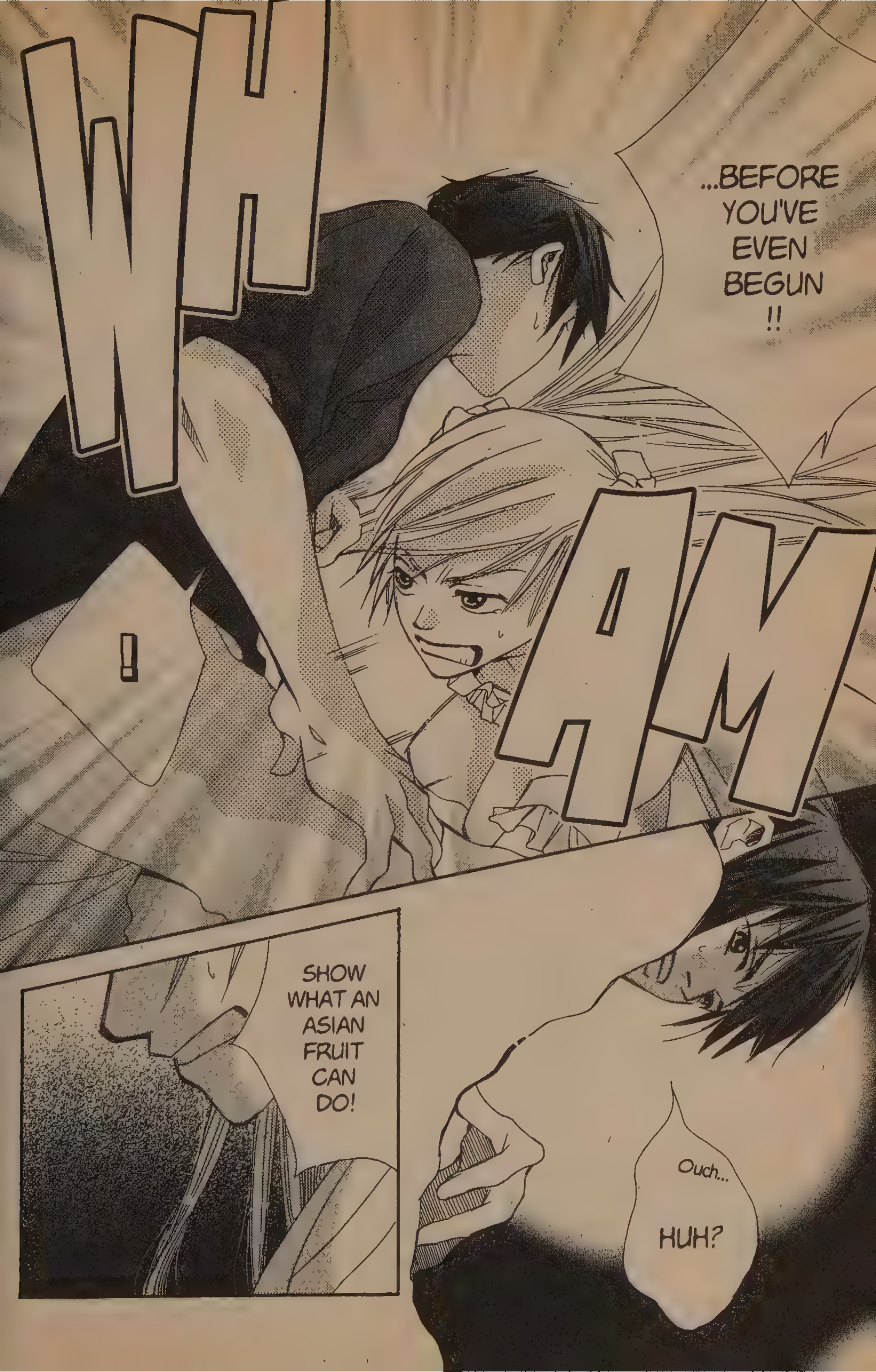

WHERE... WHERE'RE THEY HOLDING THE TEST?
BUT RAICHI CAN USUALLY JUMP MUCH HIGHER.
YEAH, HE PASSED THE MORNING PRELIMINARIES, BUT HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE DOING TOO WELL TODAY.
!
GRAB
!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S RAICHI?
HUH?
IT'S...LUNCH BREAK...SO RAICHI SHOULD BE...IN THE LOBBY?
What's this Yanki doing...?
THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH A LOT!
I'M DOING ALL THIS FOR YOU...
What language was that?
...SO DON'T YOU GIVE UP, RAICHI!
LOBB
COFF
DAMN... I'm starting to cough.
HAA
UM...

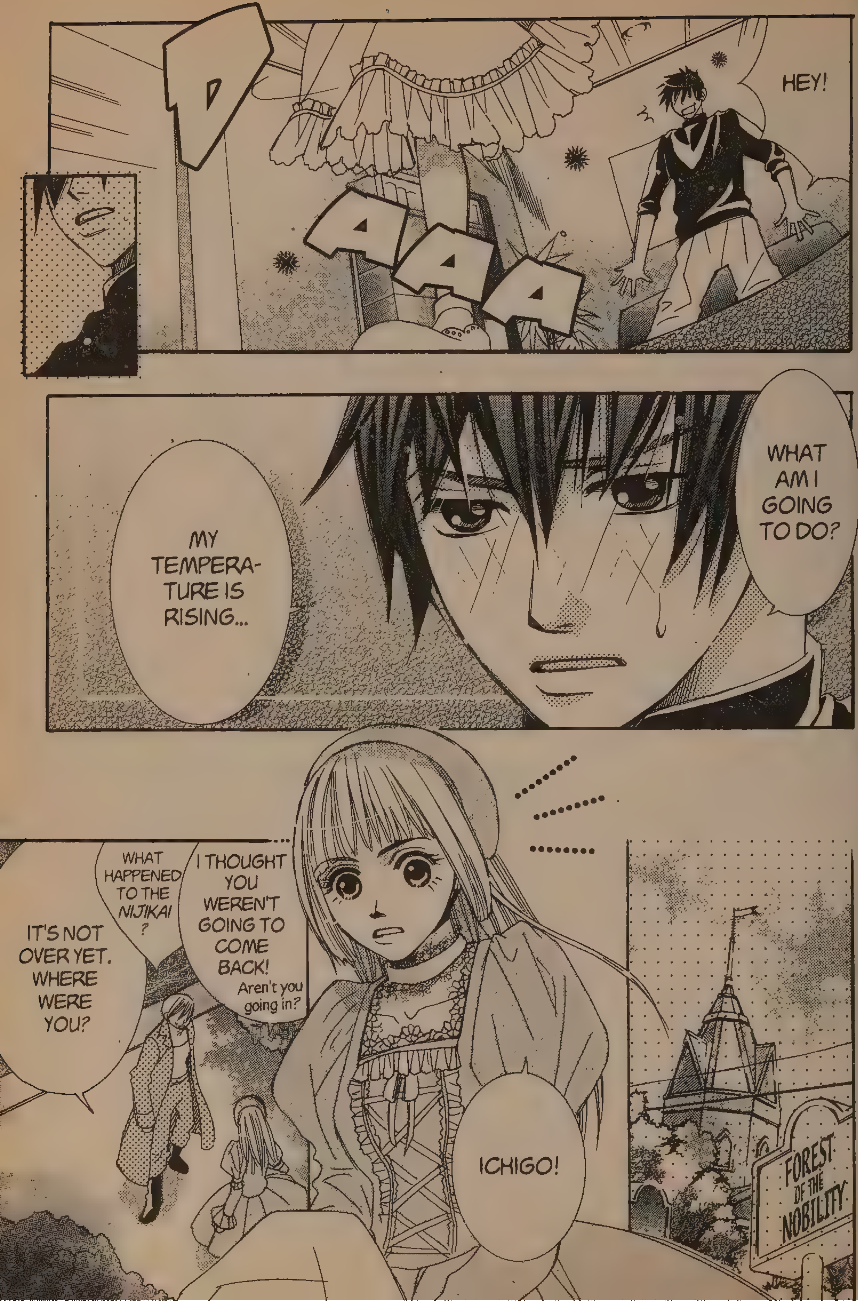

MOMOKO ...
...GIVE ME THOSE CLOTHES.
WHY?
ICHIGO?
I'LL BE BACK SOON.
STUPID FOOL.
IT'S BECAUSE YOU DID SUCH A—
BUT IF HE FAILED BECAUSE OF ME...
...I'D FEEL SO GUILTY ...

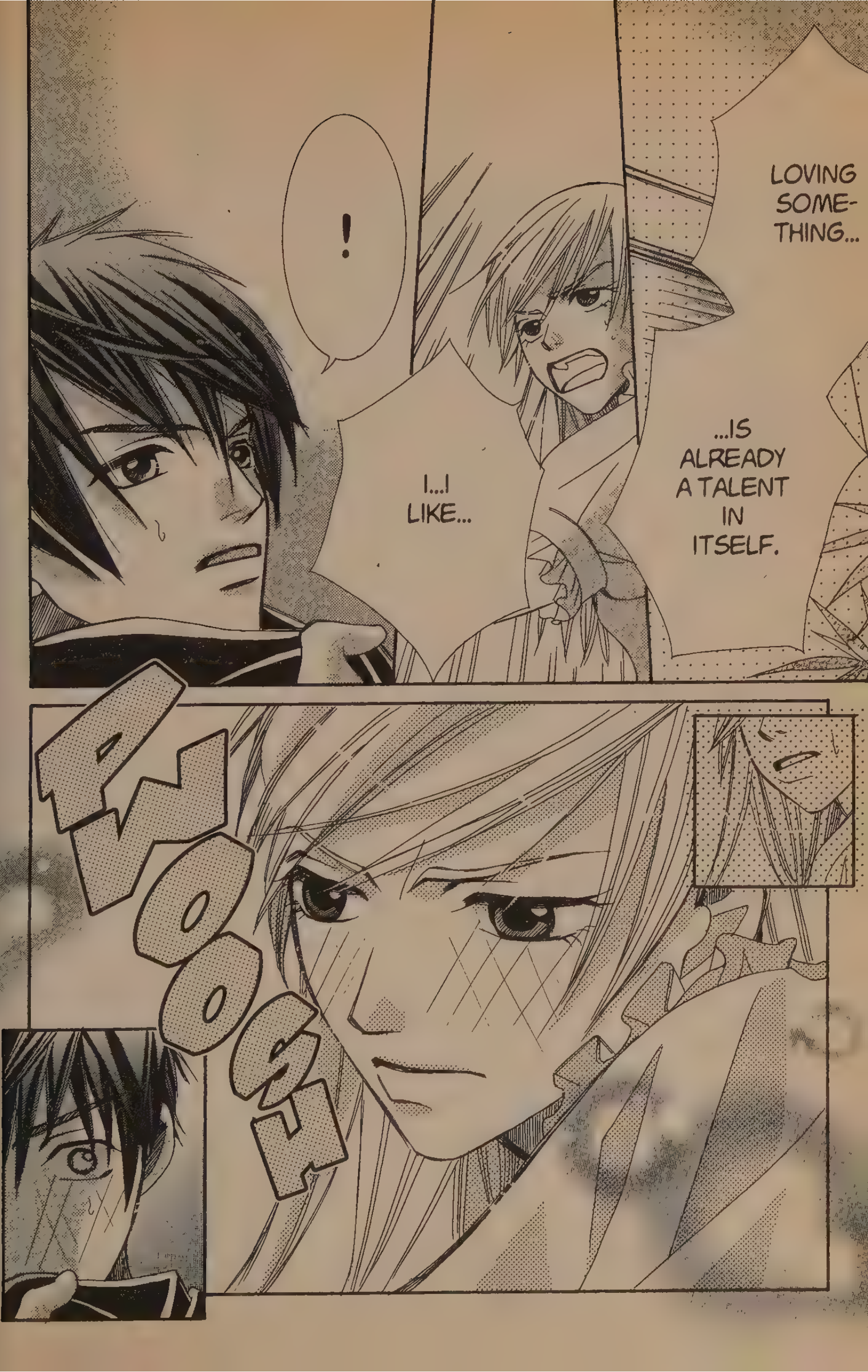

YOUR LAST?!
SOMETIMES I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME I GIVE UP.
ARE YOU... GOING TO QUIT?
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO'VE BEEN BROUGHT UP IN A BETTER ENVIRONMENT THAN ME...
...AND THE GAPS KEEP WIDENING BETWEEN ME AND THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD TO STUDY ABROAD AND HAVE THE COOPERATION OF THEIR PARENTS.
YES...
...I DON'T HAVE THE TALENT.
HMPH.
DON'T GIVE UP...

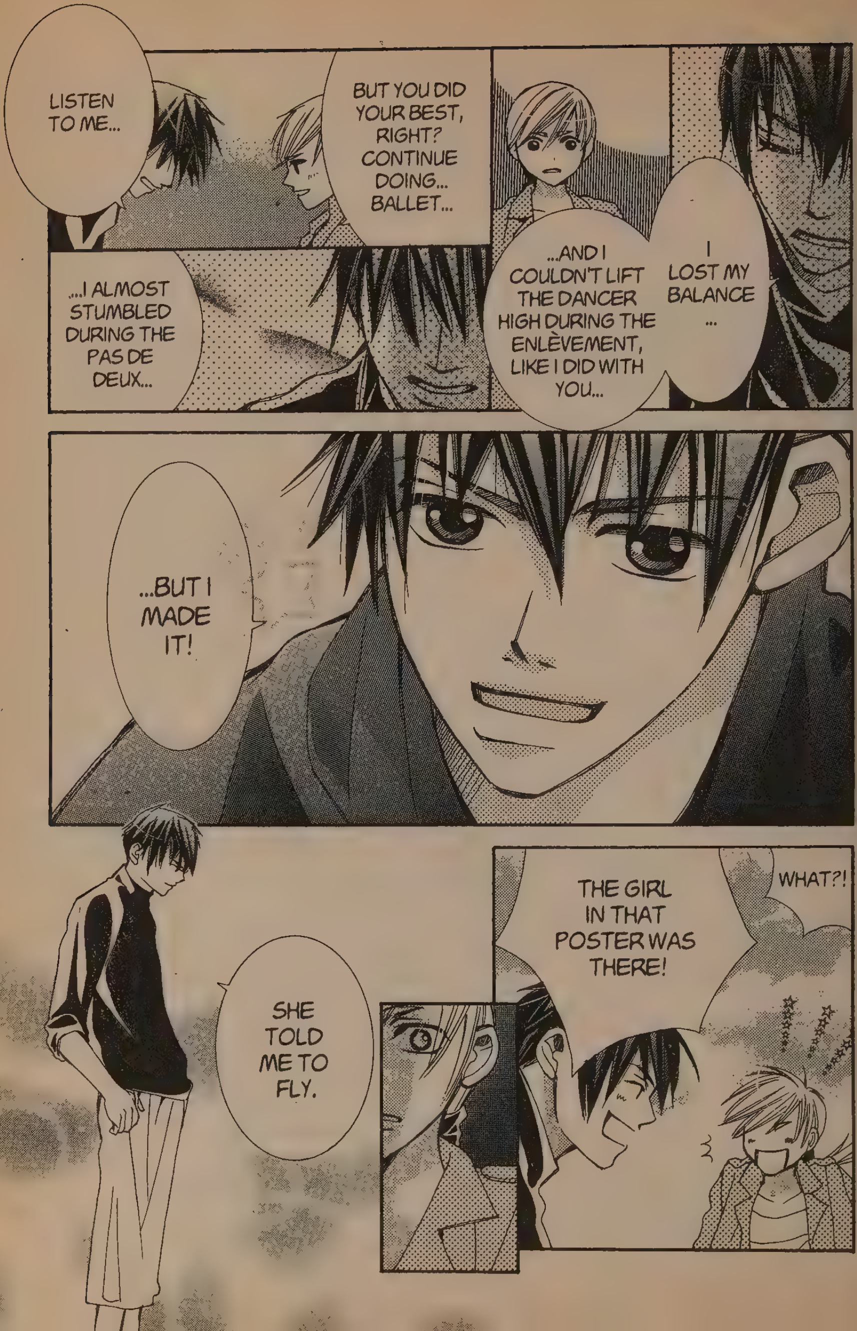

I-I...
YOU'RE... THE POSTER ...?
Why? Huh?
P...
...PLEASE DO YOUR BEST IN THE AUDITION!
I-I... SAW THIS!
THE NUTCRACKER
AH... THANK YOU. I'M GLAD, BUT...
...THIS IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE MY LAST AUDITION.

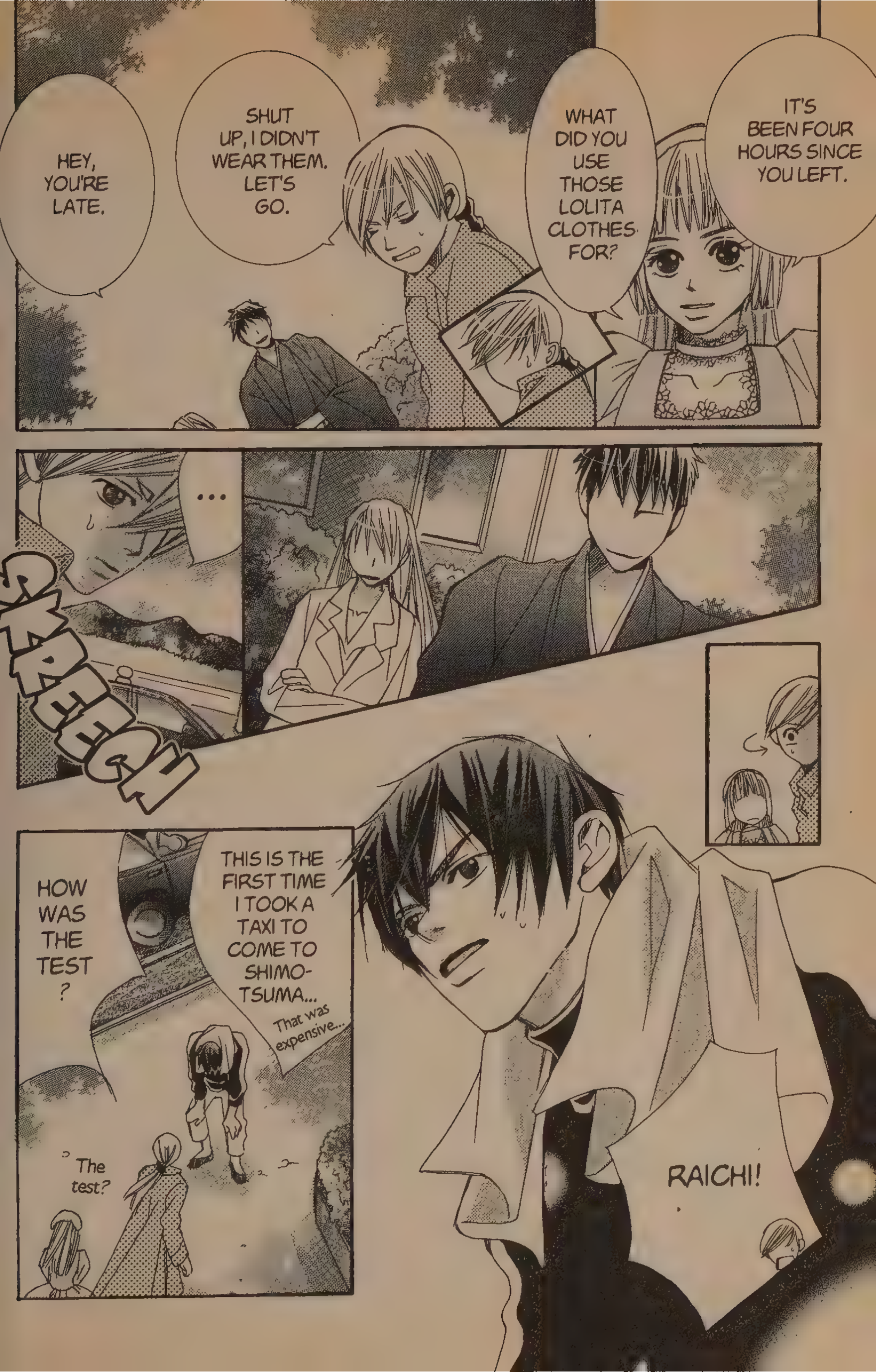

JUST THINK ABOUT FLYING!
FLY!
FLY!
FLY HIGH, UP TO THE HEAVENS!

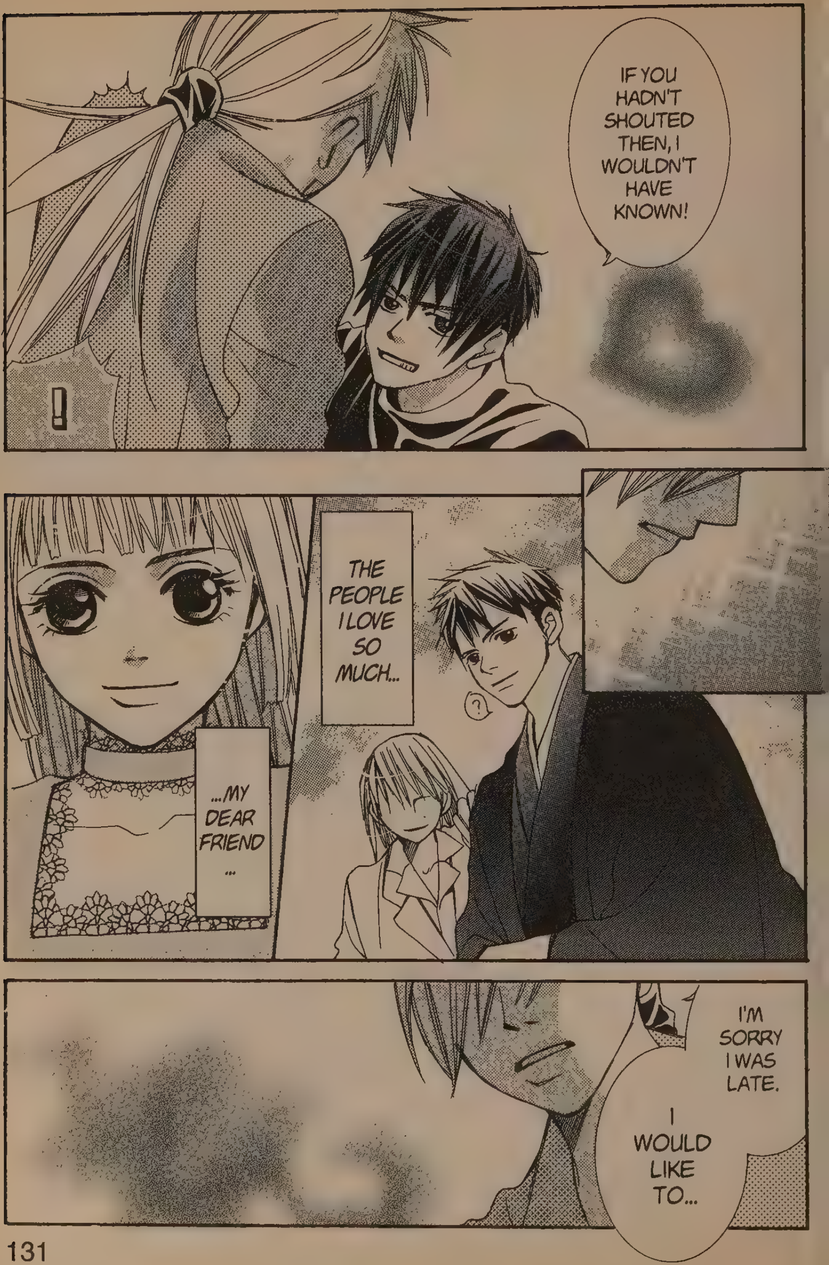

...BEFORE YOU'VE EVEN BEGUN !!
WHAM
!
Ouch...
HUH?
SHOW WHAT AN ASIAN FRUIT CAN DO!

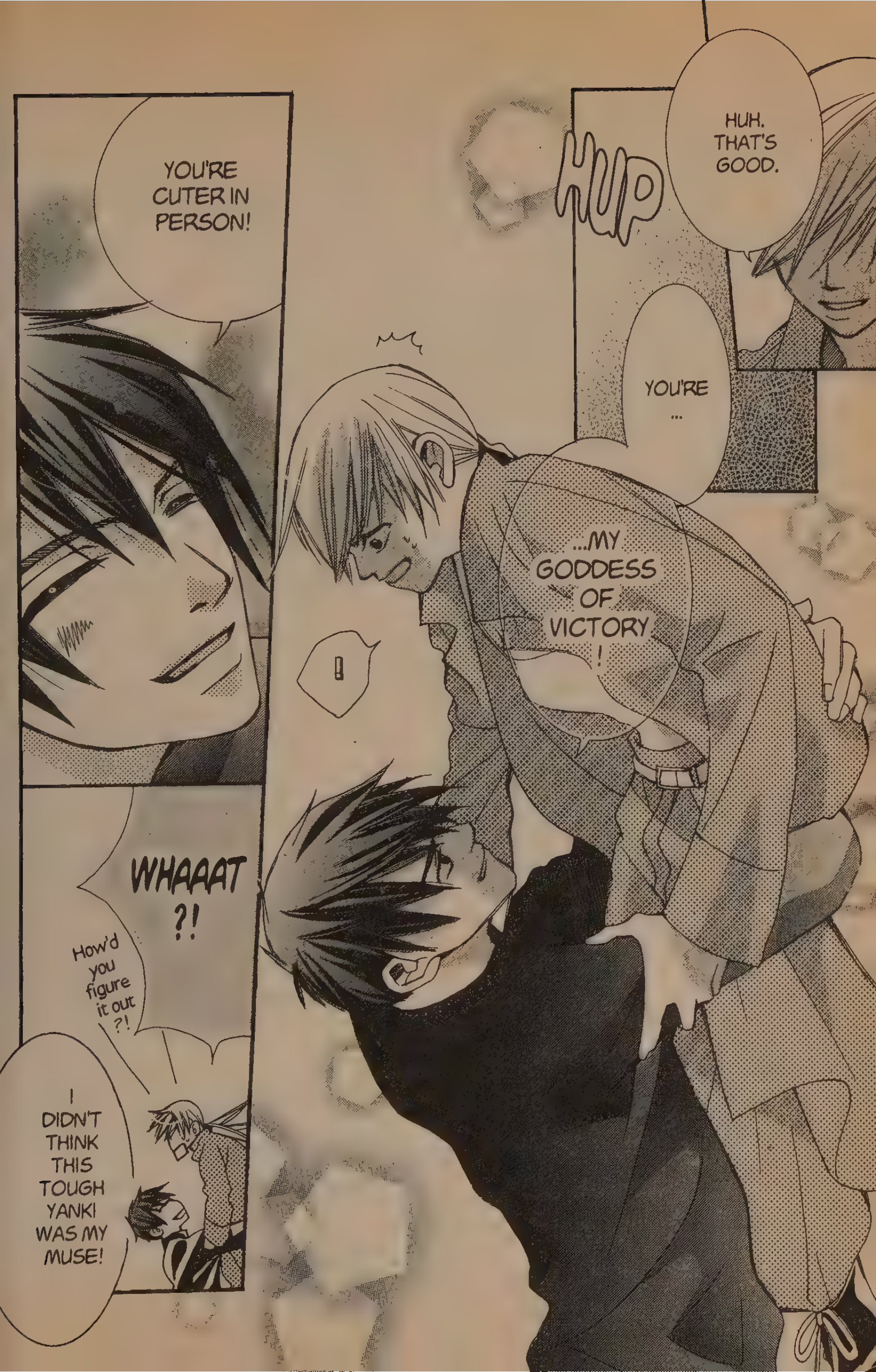

DAAAA
HEY!
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
MY TEMPERATURE IS RISING...
......
ICHIGO!
I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO COME BACK! Aren't you going in?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE NIJIKAI?
IT'S NOT OVER YET. WHERE WERE YOU?
FOREST OF THE NOBILITY

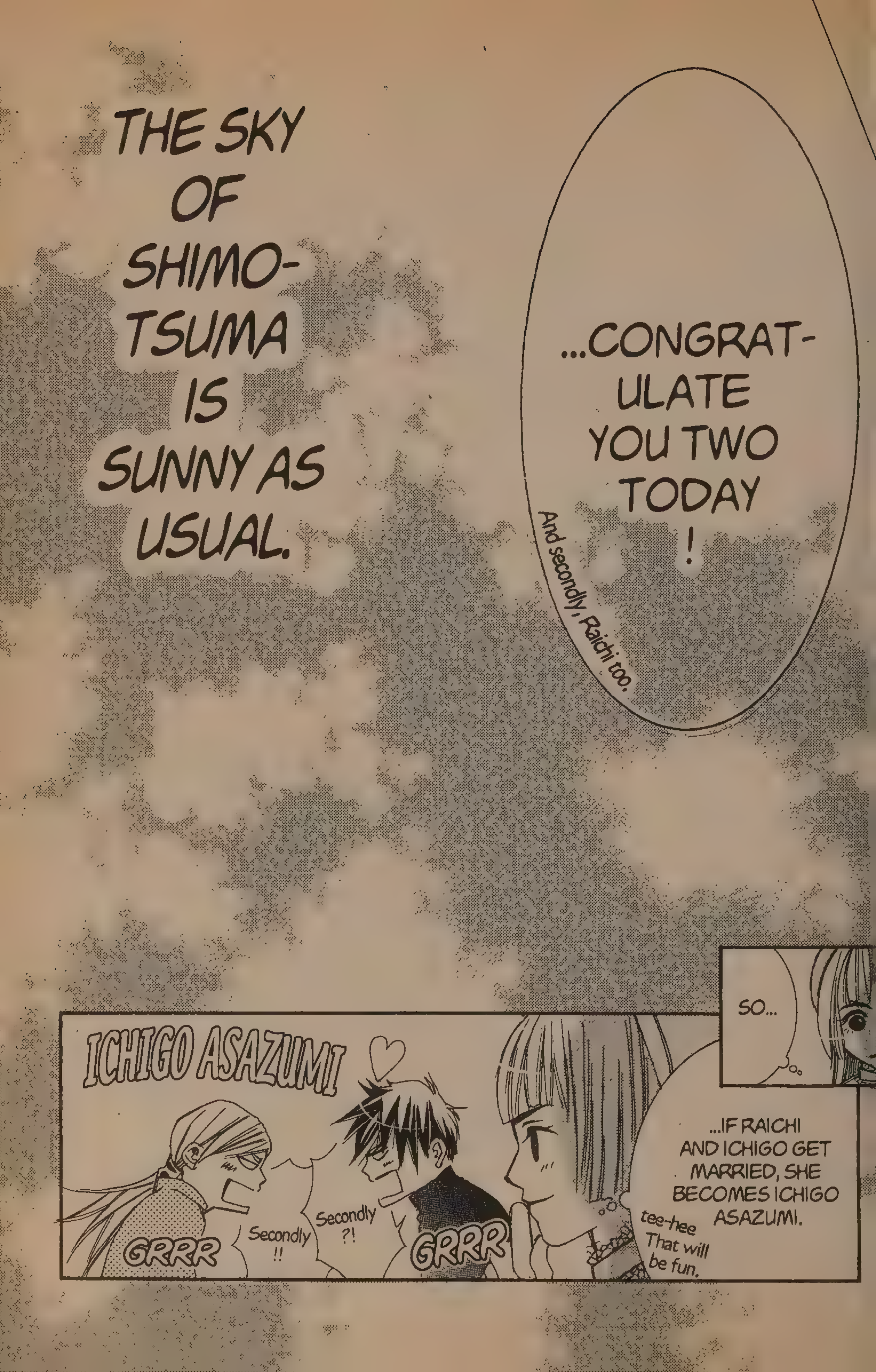

LOVING SOME-THING...
...IS ALREADY A TALENT IN ITSELF.
!
I...I LIKE...
FWOOSH

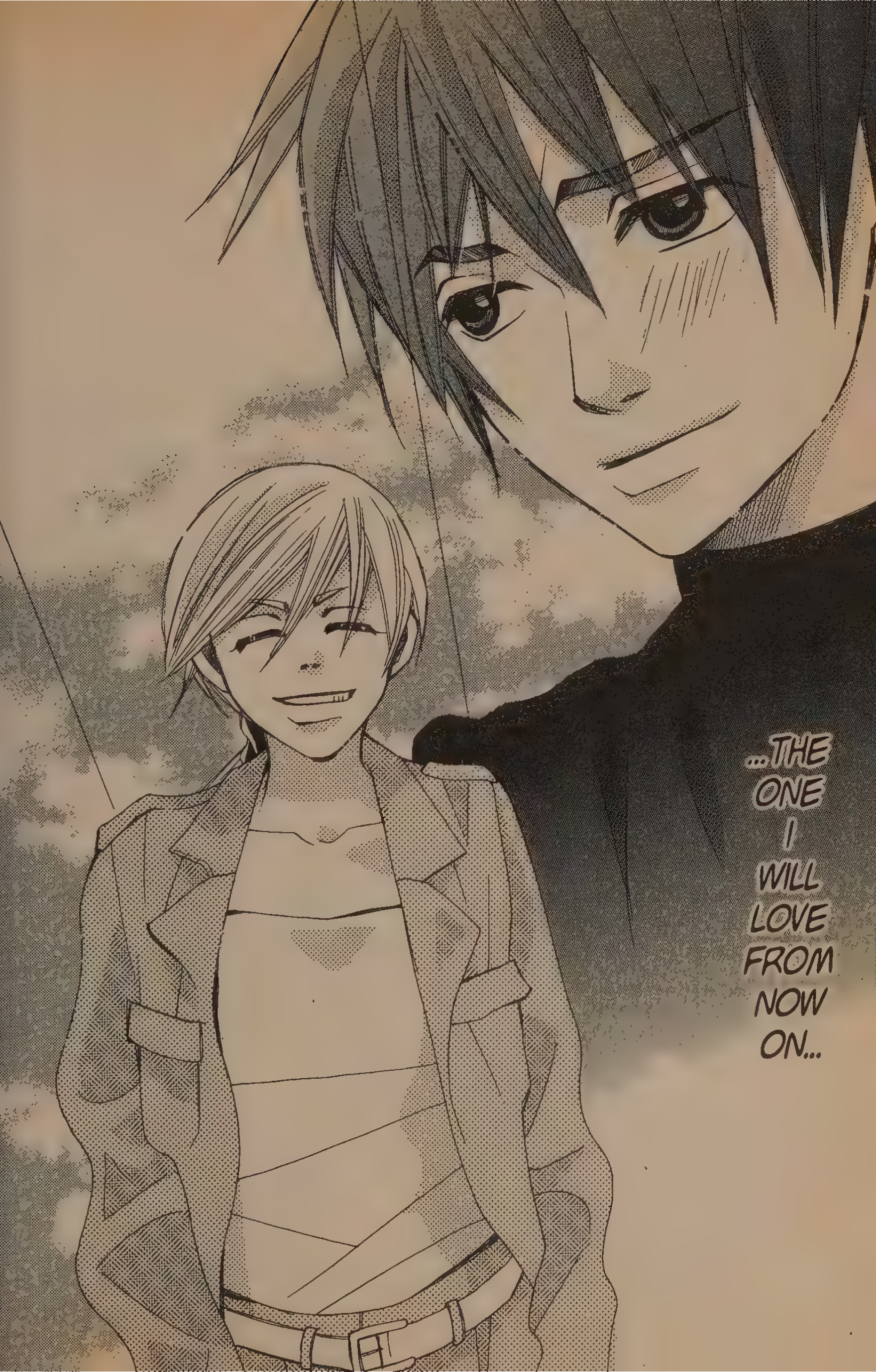

BUT YOU DID YOUR BEST, RIGHT? CONTINUE DOING... BALLET...
LISTEN TO ME...
I LOST MY BALANCE...
...AND I COULDN'T LIFT THE DANCER HIGH DURING THE ENLÈVEMENT, LIKE I DID WITH YOU...
...I ALMOST STUMBLED DURING THE PAS DE DEUX...
...BUT I MADE IT!
THE GIRL IN THAT POSTER WAS THERE!
WHAT?!
SHE TOLD ME TO FLY.


IT'S BEEN FOUR HOURS SINCE YOU LEFT.
WHAT DID YOU USE THOSE LOLITA CLOTHES FOR?
SHUT UP, I DIDN'T WEAR THEM. LET'S GO.
HEY, YOU'RE LATE.
...
SKREECH
RAICHI!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I TOOK A TAXI TO COME TO SHIMO-TSUMA...
That was expensive...
HOW WAS THE TEST?
The test?


IF YOU HADN'T SHOUTED THEN, I WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN!
!
THE PEOPLE I LOVE SO MUCH...
?
...MY DEAR FRIEND...
I'M SORRY I WAS LATE.
I WOULD LIKE TO...


HUH. THAT'S GOOD.
HUP
YOU'RE ...
...MY GODDESS OF VICTORY!
!
YOU'RE CUTER IN PERSON!
WHAAAT?!
How'd you figure it out?!
I DIDN'T THINK THIS TOUGH YANKI WAS MY MUSE!


...CONGRATULATE YOU TWO TODAY!
And secondly, Raichi too.
THE SKY OF SHIMOTSUMA IS SUNNY AS USUAL.
SO...
...IF RAICHI AND ICHIGO GET MARRIED, SHE BECOMES ICHIGO ASAZUMI.
tee-hee That will be fun.
ICHIGO ASAZUMI ♥
GRRR
Secondly ?!
Secondly !!
GRRR

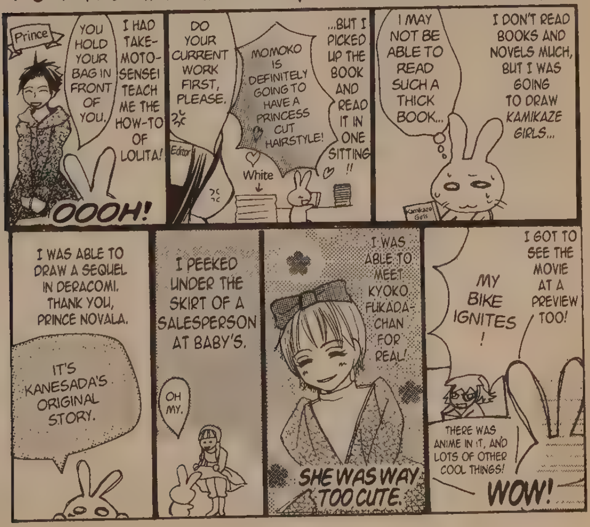


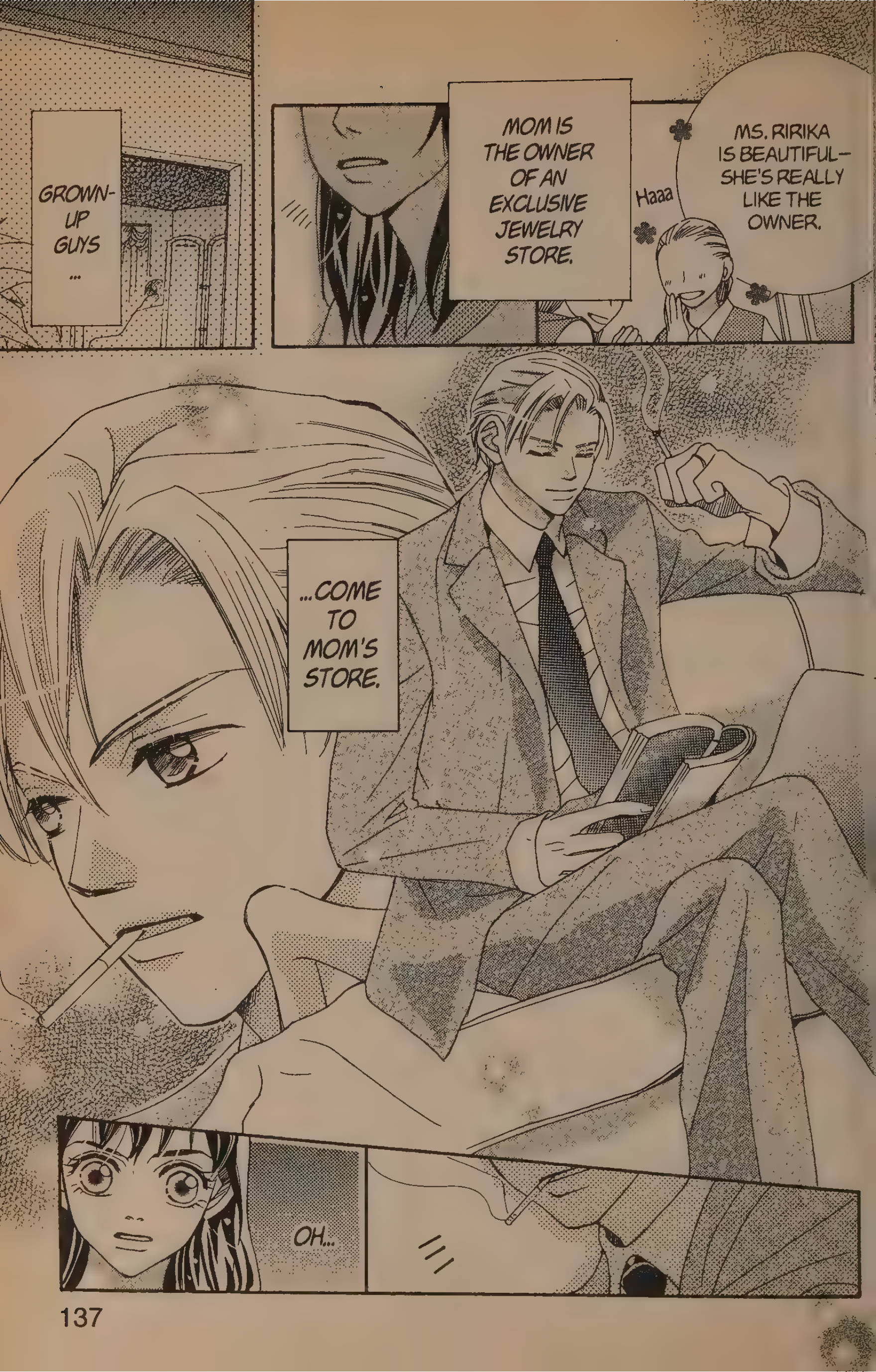
...THE ONE I WILL LOVE FROM NOW ON...

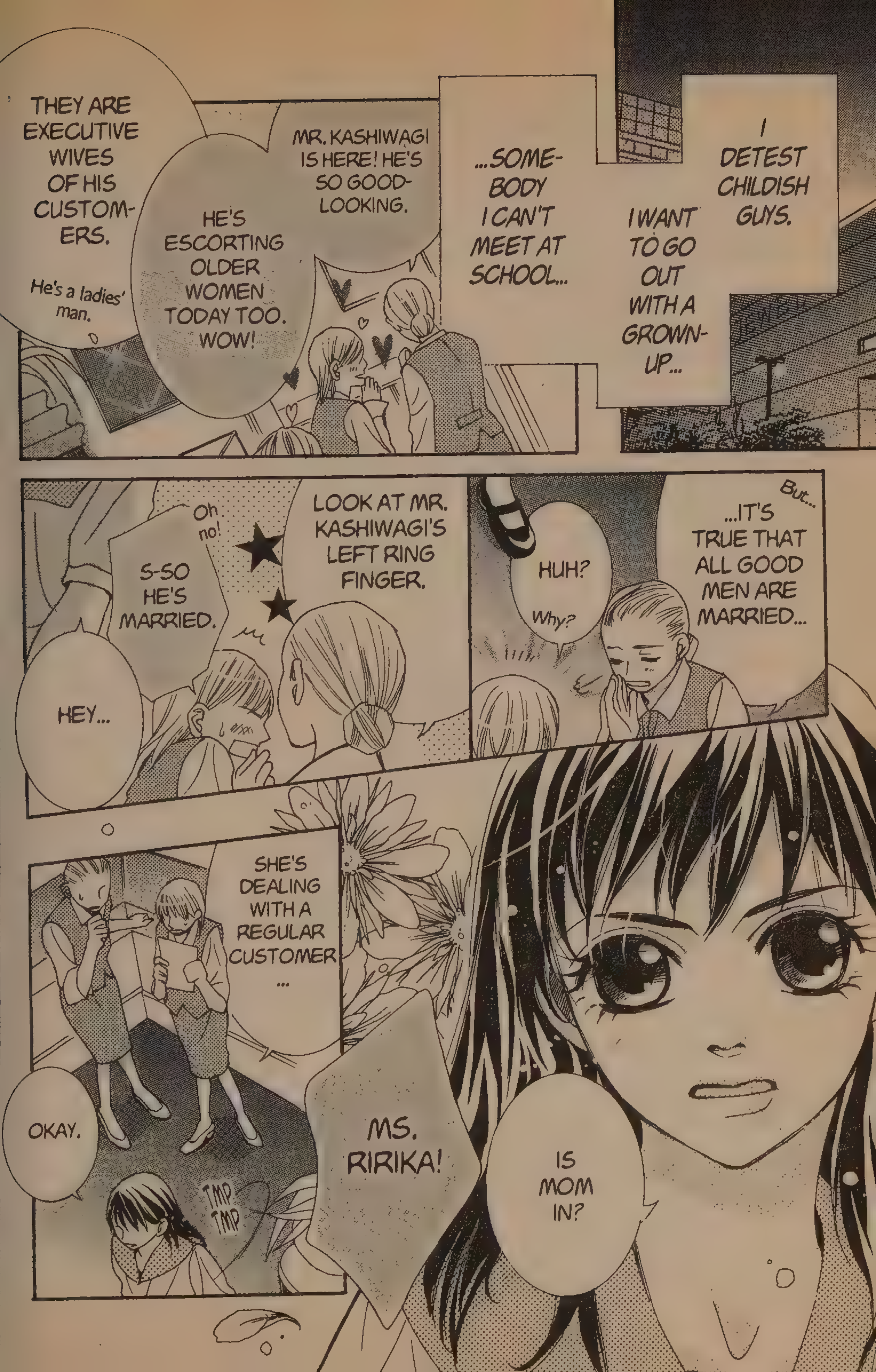
KOYUBI HIME

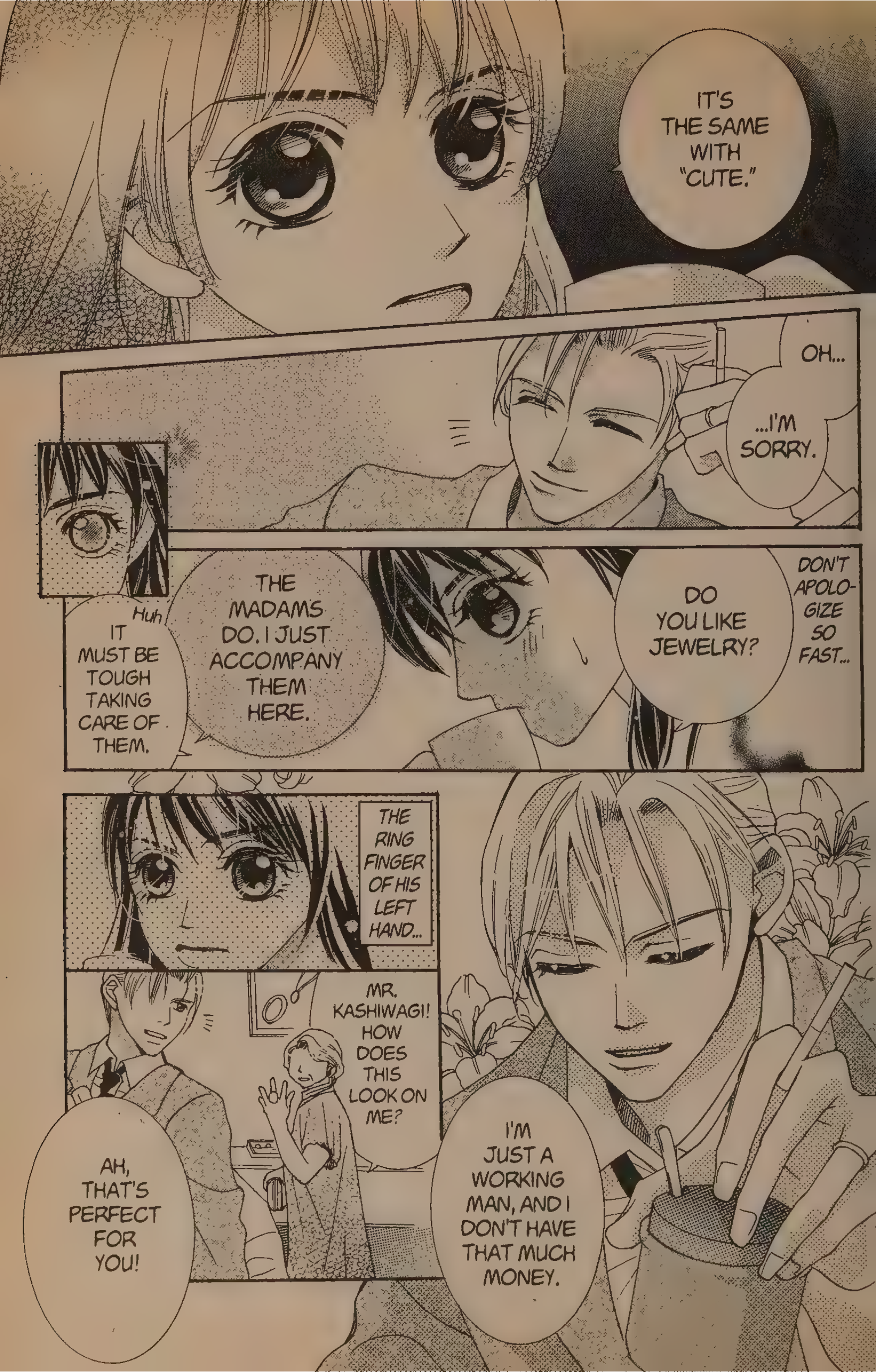
(The pinky-ring princess)

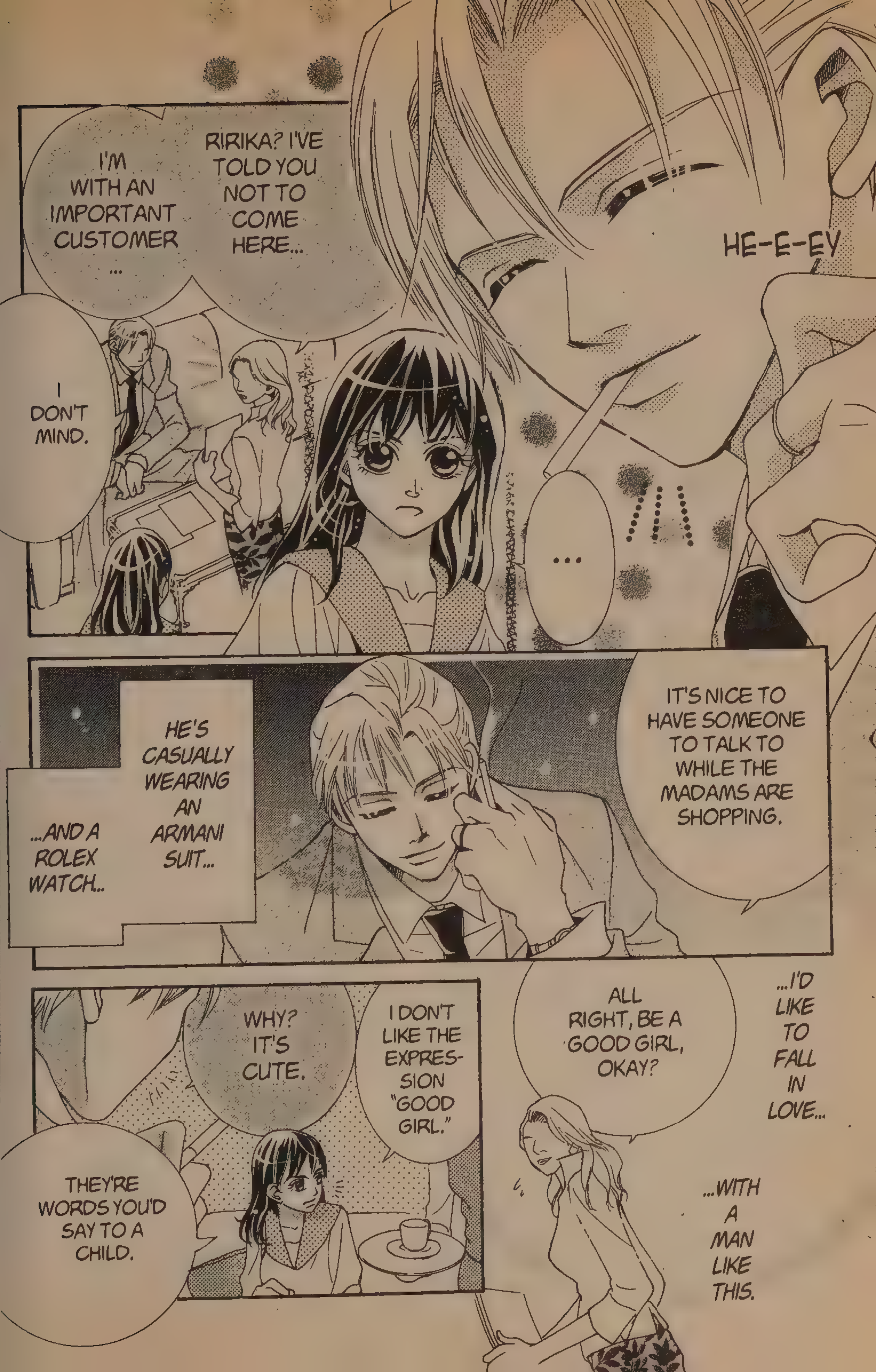
HOW THE KAMIKAZE GIRLS MANGA WAS BORN.

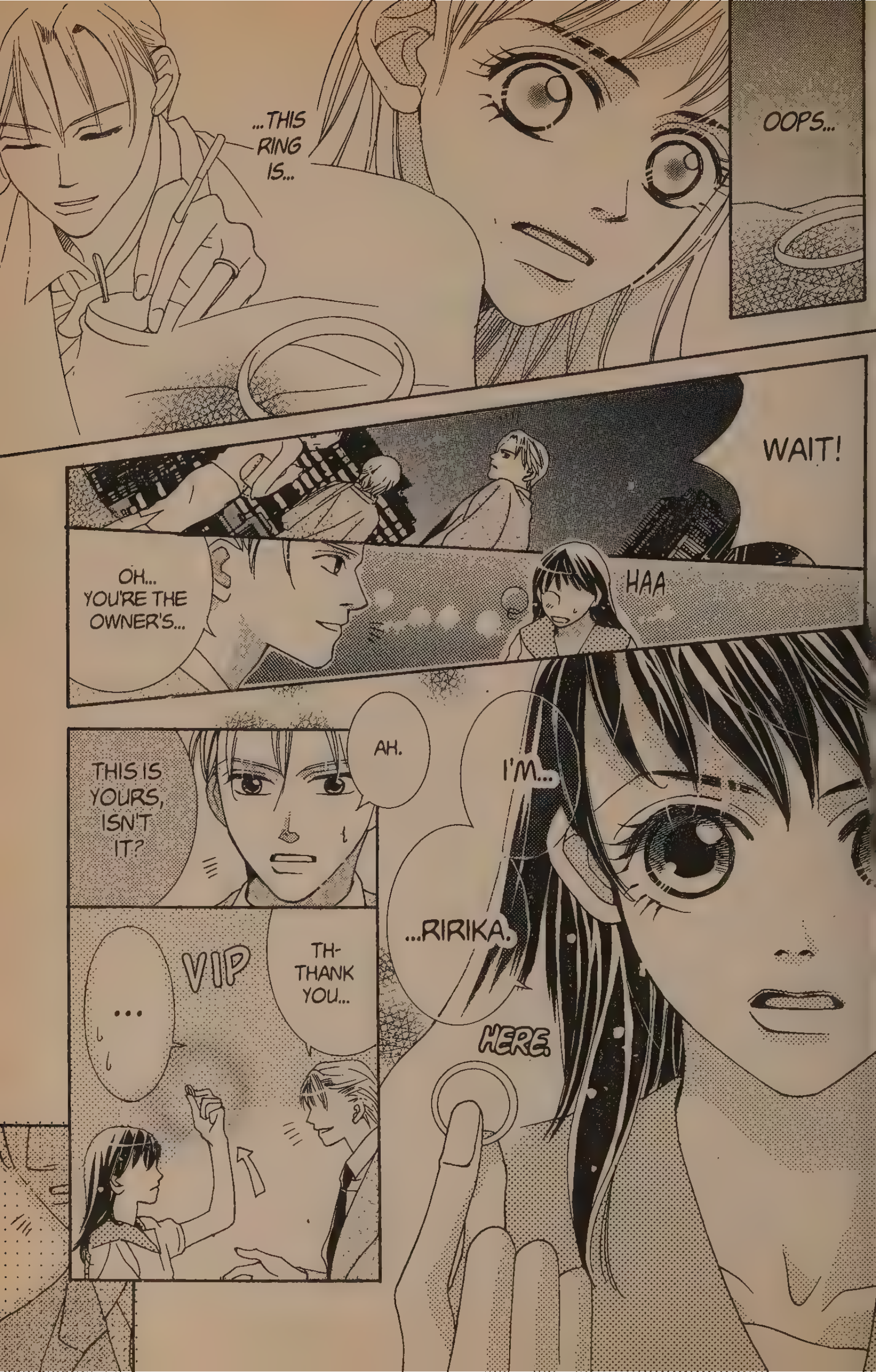

I DON'T READ BOOKS AND NOVELS MUCH, BUT I WAS GOING TO DRAW KAMIKAZE GIRLS...
I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO READ SUCH A THICK BOOK...
Kamikaze Girls
...BUT I PICKED UP THE BOOK AND READ IT IN ONE SITTING!!
MOMOKO IS DEFINITELY GOING TO HAVE A PRINCESS CUT HAIRSTYLE!
White
DO YOUR CURRENT WORK FIRST, PLEASE.
Editor
I HAD TAKEMOTO-SENSEI TEACH ME THE HOW-TO OF LOLITA!
YOU HOLD YOUR BAG IN FRONT OF YOU.
Prince
OOOH!
I GOT TO SEE THE MOVIE AT A PREVIEW TOO!
MY BIKE IGNITES!
THERE WAS ANIME IN IT, AND LOTS OF OTHER COOL THINGS!
WOW!
I WAS ABLE TO MEET KYOKO FUKADA-CHAN FOR REAL!
SHE WAS WAY TOO CUTE.
I PEEKED UNDER THE SKIRT OF A SALESPERSON AT BABY'S.
OH MY.
I WAS ABLE TO DRAW A SEQUEL IN DERACOMI. THANK YOU, PRINCE NOVALA.
IT'S KANESADA'S ORIGINAL STORY.

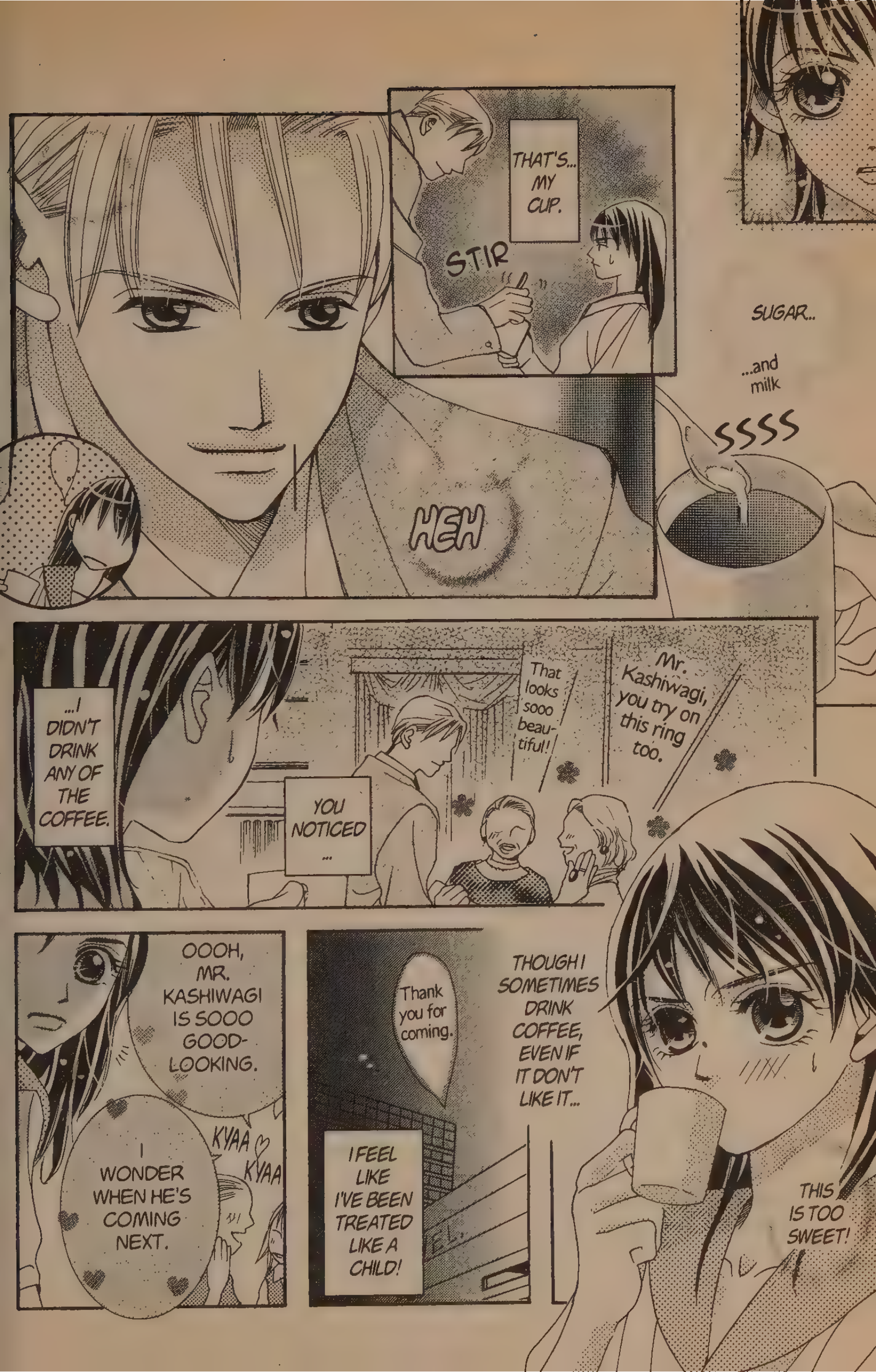

MS. RIRIKA IS BEAUTIFUL– SHE'S REALLY LIKE THE OWNER.
Haaa
MOM IS THE OWNER OF AN EXCLUSIVE JEWELRY STORE.
GROWN-UP GUYS ...
...COME TO MOM'S STORE.
OH...

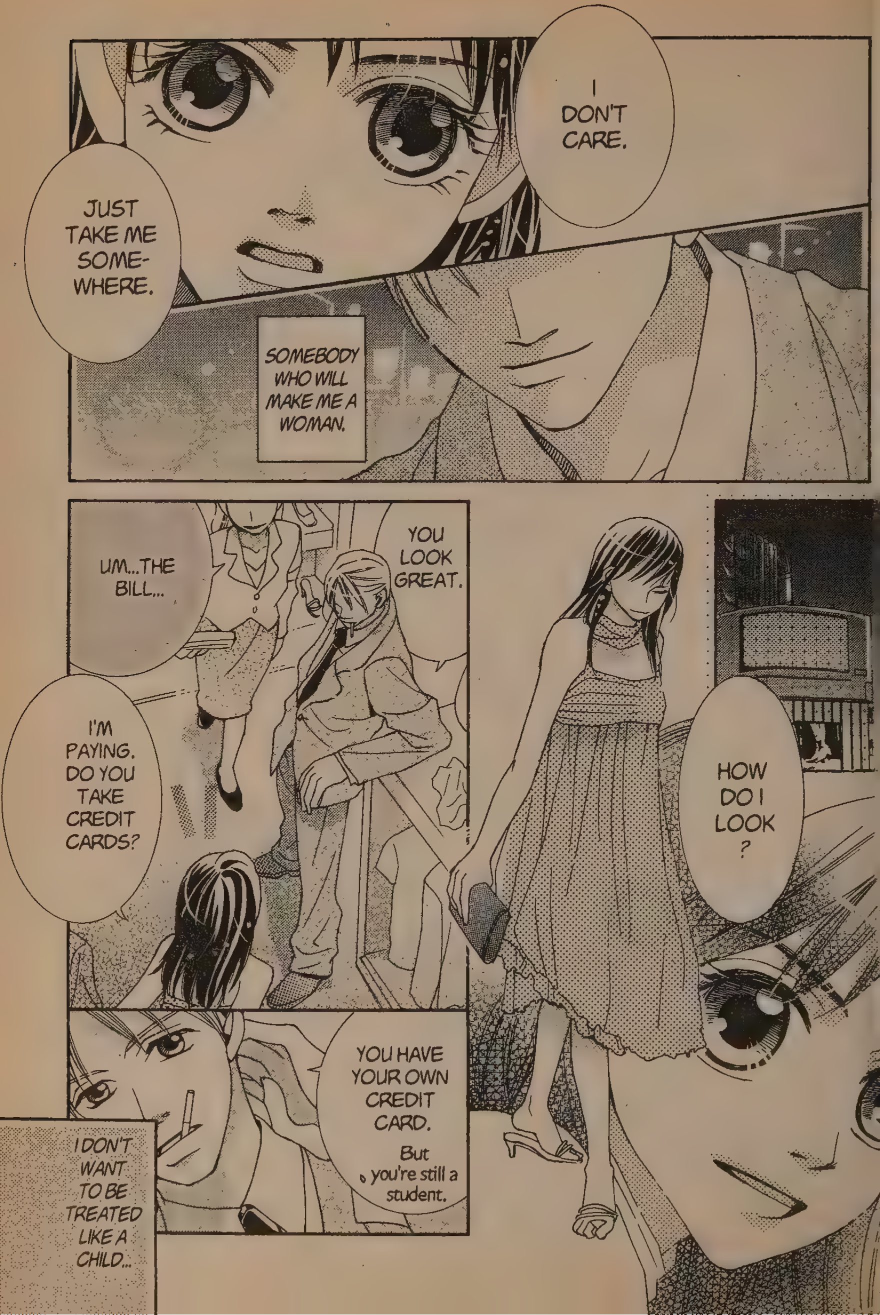

I DETEST CHILDISH GUYS.
I WANT TO GO OUT WITH A GROWN-UP...
...SOMEBODY I CAN'T MEET AT SCHOOL...
MR. KASHIWAGI IS HERE! HE'S SO GOOD-LOOKING.
HE'S ESCORTING OLDER WOMEN TODAY TOO. WOW!
THEY ARE EXECUTIVE WIVES OF HIS CUSTOMERS.
He's a ladies' man.
But...
...IT'S TRUE THAT ALL GOOD MEN ARE MARRIED...
HUH?
Why?
LOOK AT MR. KASHIWAGI'S LEFT RING FINGER.
Oh no!
S-SO HE'S MARRIED.
HEY...
IS MOM IN?
MS. RIRIKA!
SHE'S DEALING WITH A REGULAR CUSTOMER...
OKAY.
TMP TMP

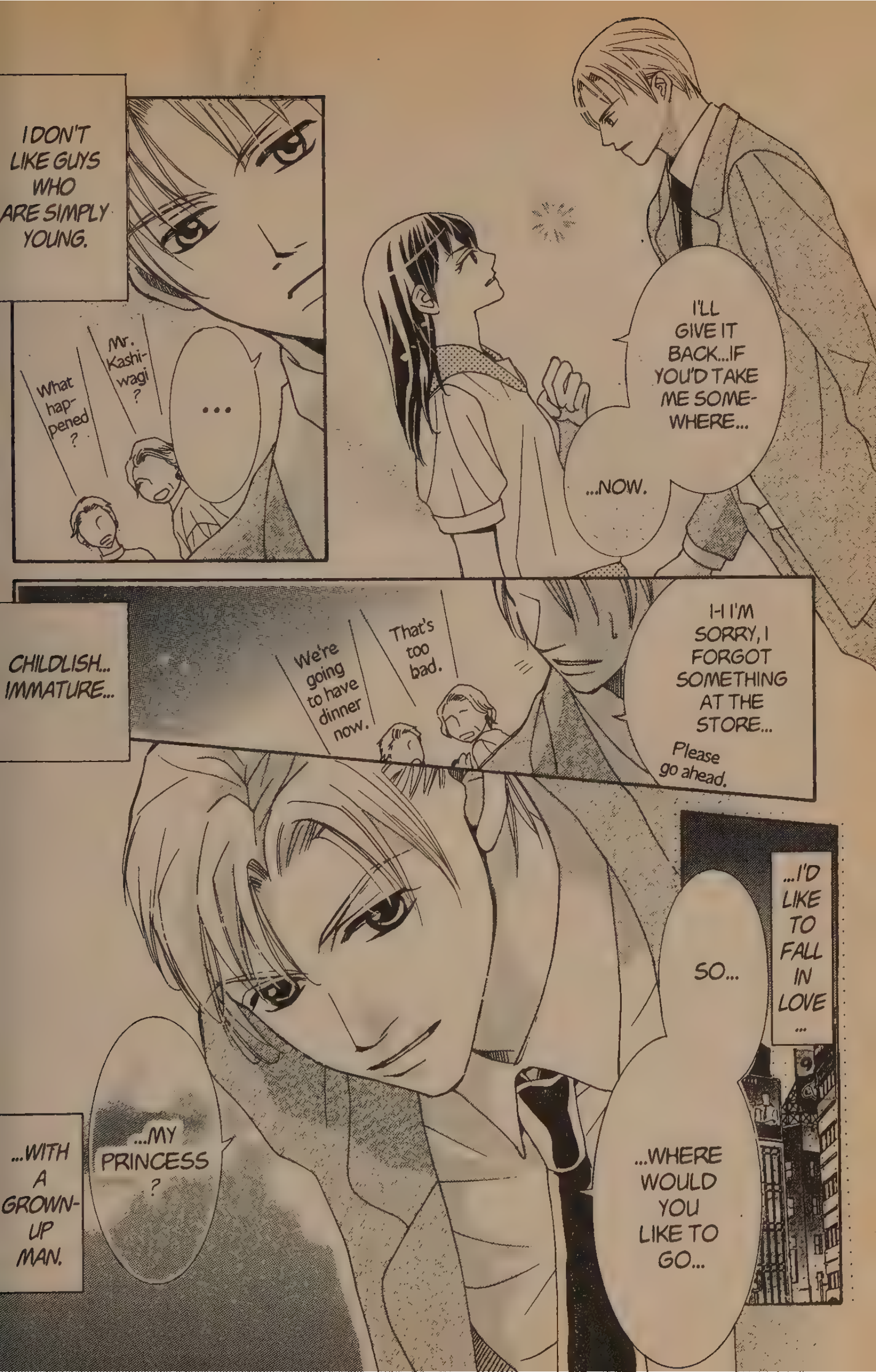

IT'S THE SAME WITH "CUTE."
OH...
...I'M SORRY.
DON'T APOLOGIZE SO FAST...
DO YOU LIKE JEWELRY?
THE MADAMS DO. I JUST ACCOMPANY THEM HERE.
Huh
IT MUST BE TOUGH TAKING CARE OF THEM.
I'M JUST A WORKING MAN, AND I DON'T HAVE THAT MUCH MONEY.
THE RING FINGER OF HIS LEFT HAND...
MR. KASHIWAGI! HOW DOES THIS LOOK ON ME?
AH, THAT'S PERFECT FOR YOU!

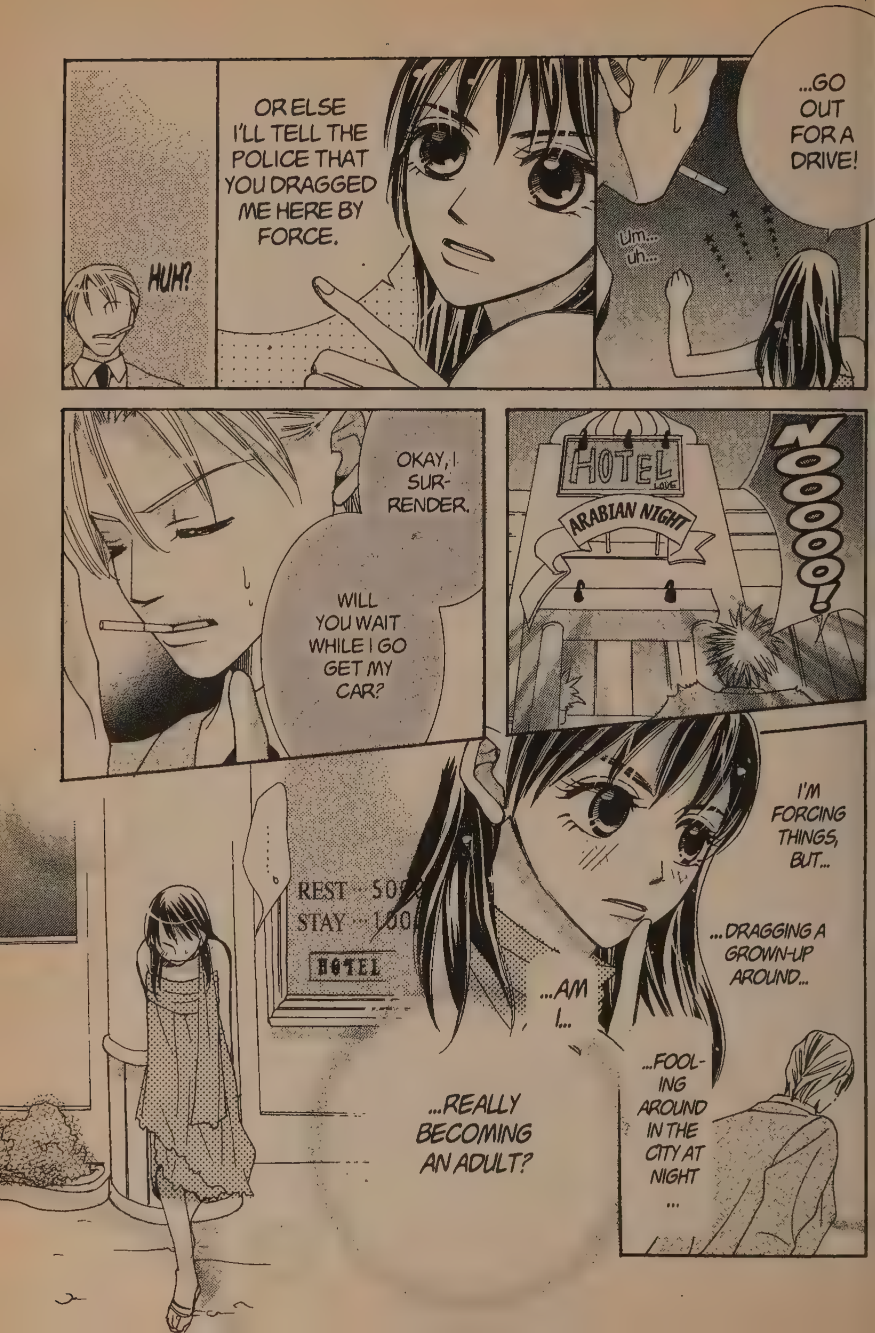

HE-E-EY
...
RIRIKA? I'VE TOLD YOU NOT TO COME HERE...
I'M WITH AN IMPORTANT CUSTOMER ...
I DON'T MIND.
IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK TO WHILE THE MADAMS ARE SHOPPING.
HE'S CASUALLY WEARING AN ARMANI SUIT...
...AND A ROLEX WATCH...
...I'D LIKE TO FALL IN LOVE...
ALL RIGHT, BE A GOOD GIRL, OKAY?
...WITH A MAN LIKE THIS.
I DON'T LIKE THE EXPRESSION "GOOD GIRL."
WHY? IT'S CUTE.
THEY'RE WORDS YOU'D SAY TO A CHILD.

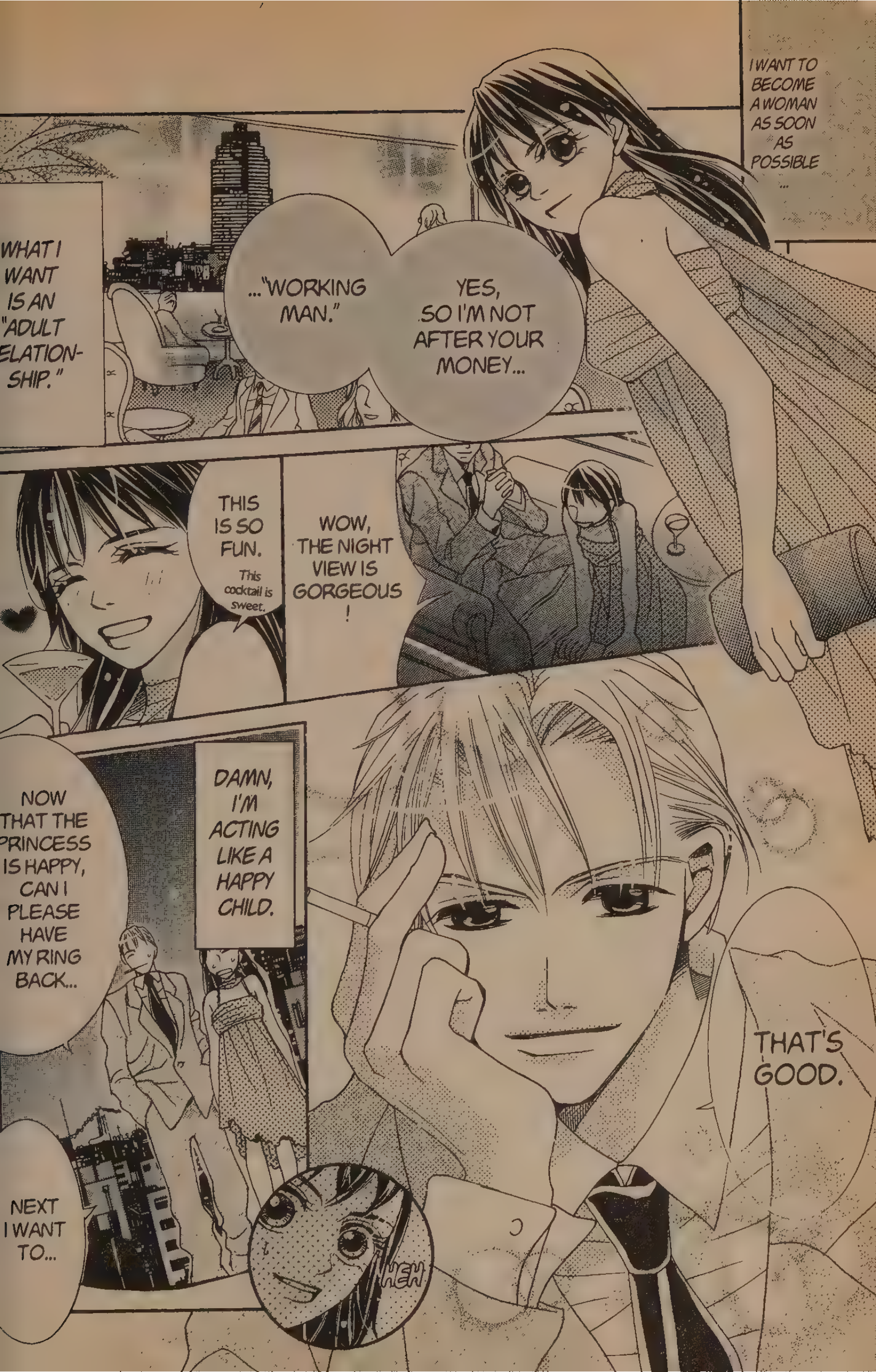

OOPS...
...THIS RING IS...
WAIT!
HAA
OH... YOU'RE THE OWNER'S...
I'M...
...RIRIKA.
HERE.
AH.
THIS IS YOURS, ISN'T IT?
TH- THANK YOU...
VIP
...

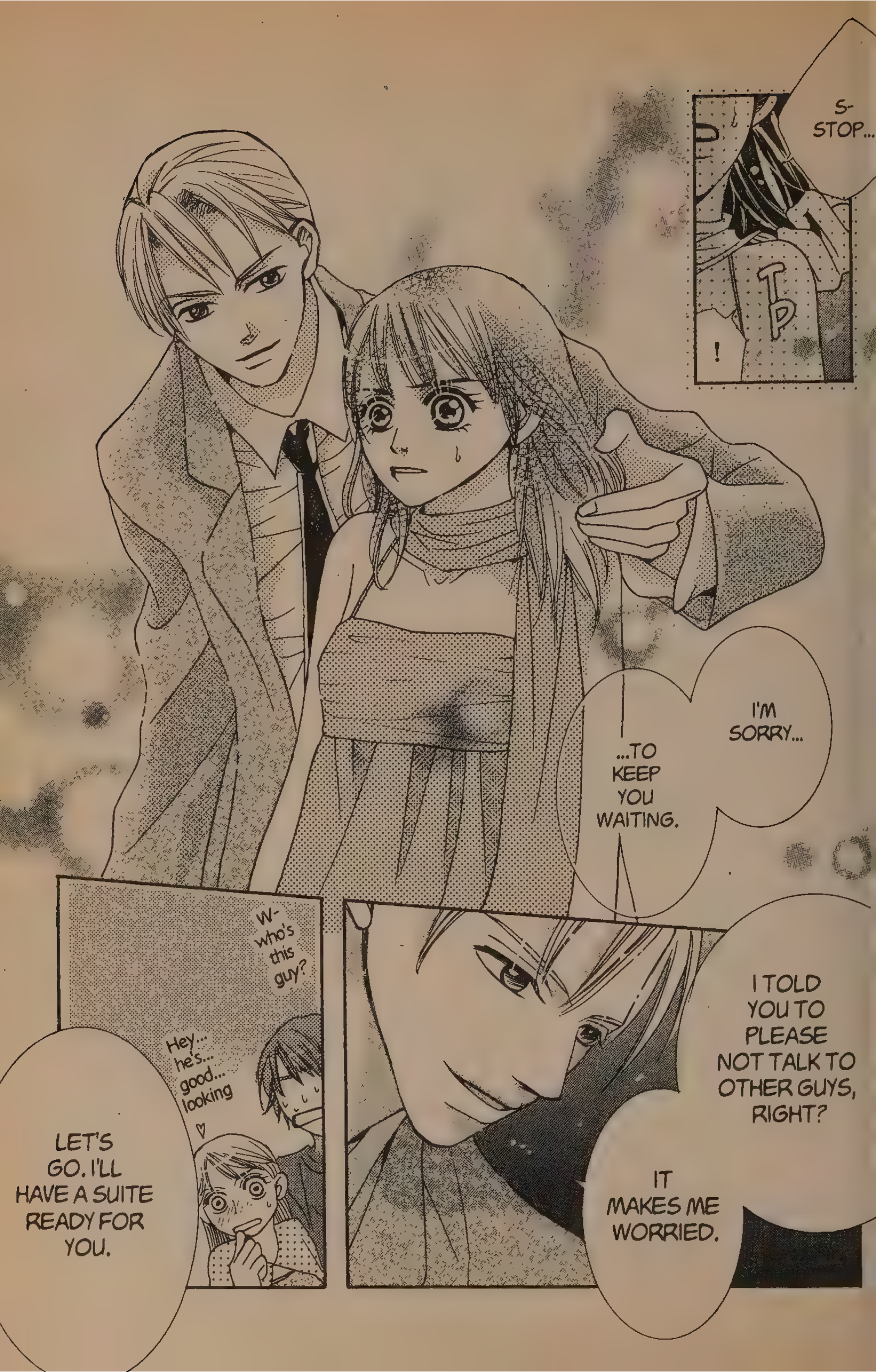

SUGAR..
...and milk
SSSS
THAT'S... MY CUP.
STIR
HEH
Mr. Kashiwagi, you try on this ring too.
That looks sooo beau-tiful!
YOU NOTICED ...
...I DIDN'T DRINK ANY OF THE COFFEE.
THOUGH I SOMETIMES DRINK COFFEE, EVEN IF IT DON'T LIKE IT...
THIS IS TOO SWEET!
Thank you for coming.
I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN TREATED LIKE A CHILD!
OOOH, MR. KASHIWAGI IS SOOO GOOD-LOOKING.
KYAA
KYAA
I WONDER WHEN HE'S COMING NEXT.

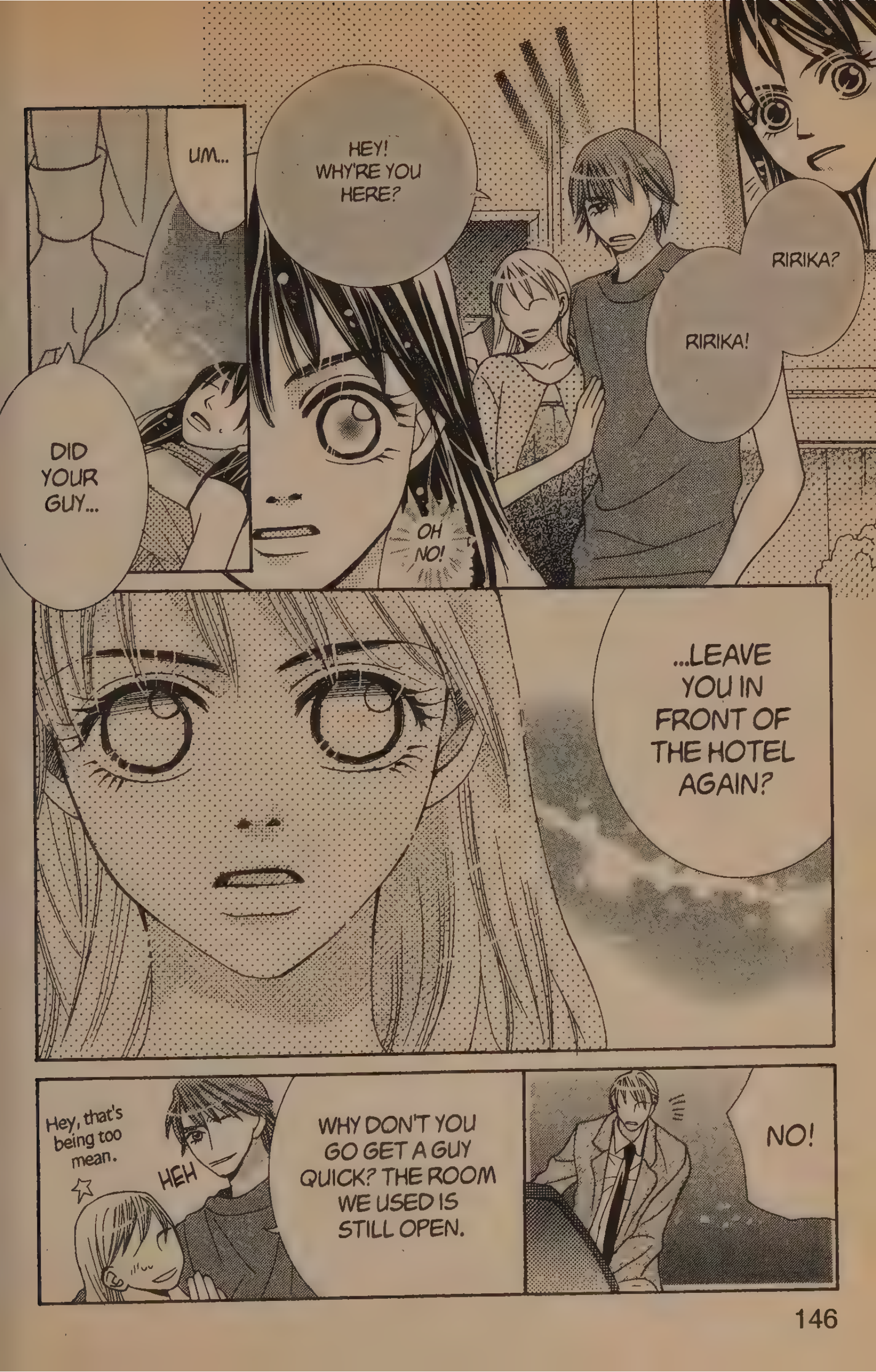

I DON'T CARE.
JUST TAKE ME SOMEWHERE.
SOMEBODY WHO WILL MAKE ME A WOMAN.
HOW DO I LOOK?
YOU LOOK GREAT.
UM...THE BILL...
I'M PAYING. DO YOU TAKE CREDIT CARDS?
YOU HAVE YOUR OWN CREDIT CARD. But you're still a student.
I DON'T WANT TO BE TREATED LIKE A CHILD...

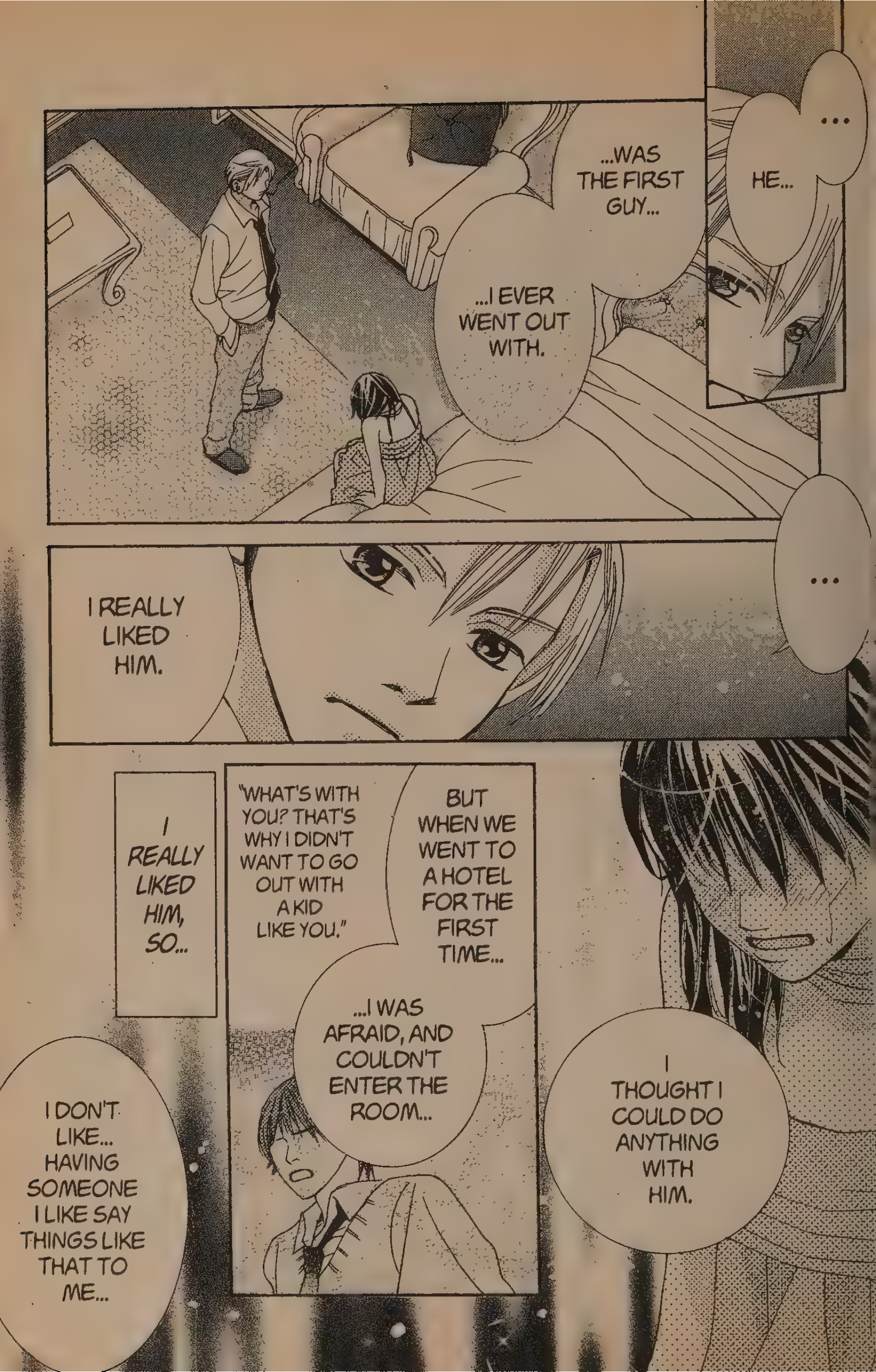

I'LL GIVE IT BACK...IF YOU'D TAKE ME SOMEWHERE...
...NOW.
...
Mr. Kashiwagi?
What happened?
I DON'T LIKE GUYS WHO ARE SIMPLY YOUNG.
I-I I'M SORRY, I FORGOT SOMETHING AT THE STORE... Please go ahead.
That's too bad.
We're going to have dinner now.
CHILDLISH... IMMATURE...
...I'D LIKE TO FALL IN LOVE...
SO...
...WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO...
...MY PRINCESS?
...WITH A GROWN-UP MAN.

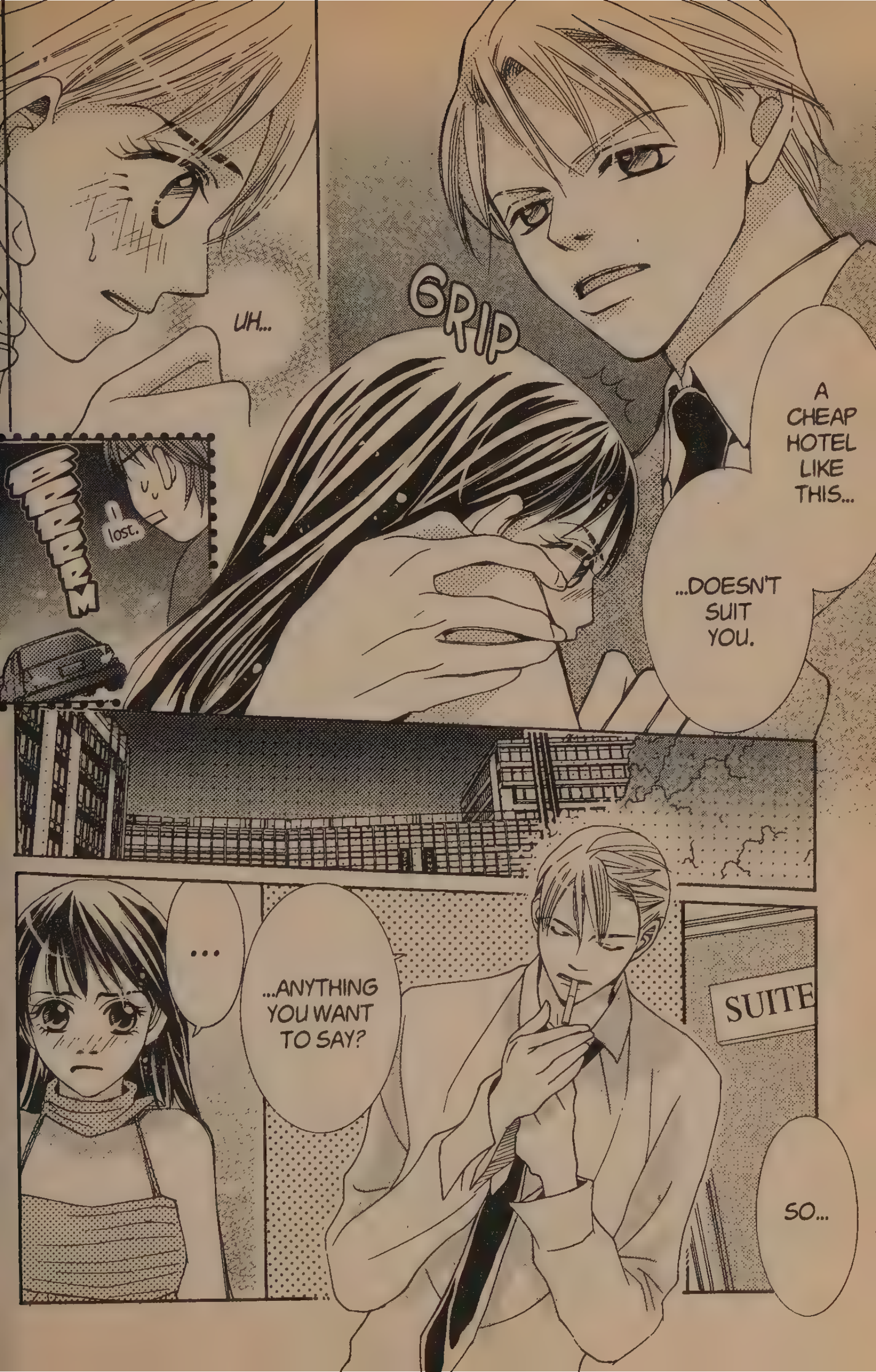

...GO OUT FOR A DRIVE!
Um... uh...
OR ELSE I'LL TELL THE POLICE THAT YOU DRAGGED ME HERE BY FORCE.
HUH?
HOTEL LOVE
ARABIAN NIGHT
NOOOOOO!
OKAY, I SURRENDER.
WILL YOU WAIT WHILE I GO GET MY CAR?
I'M FORCING THINGS, BUT...
...DRAGGING A GROWN-UP AROUND...
...FOOLING AROUND IN THE CITY AT NIGHT...
...AM I...
...REALLY BECOMING AN ADULT?
REST ··· 50
STAY ··· 10
HOTEL

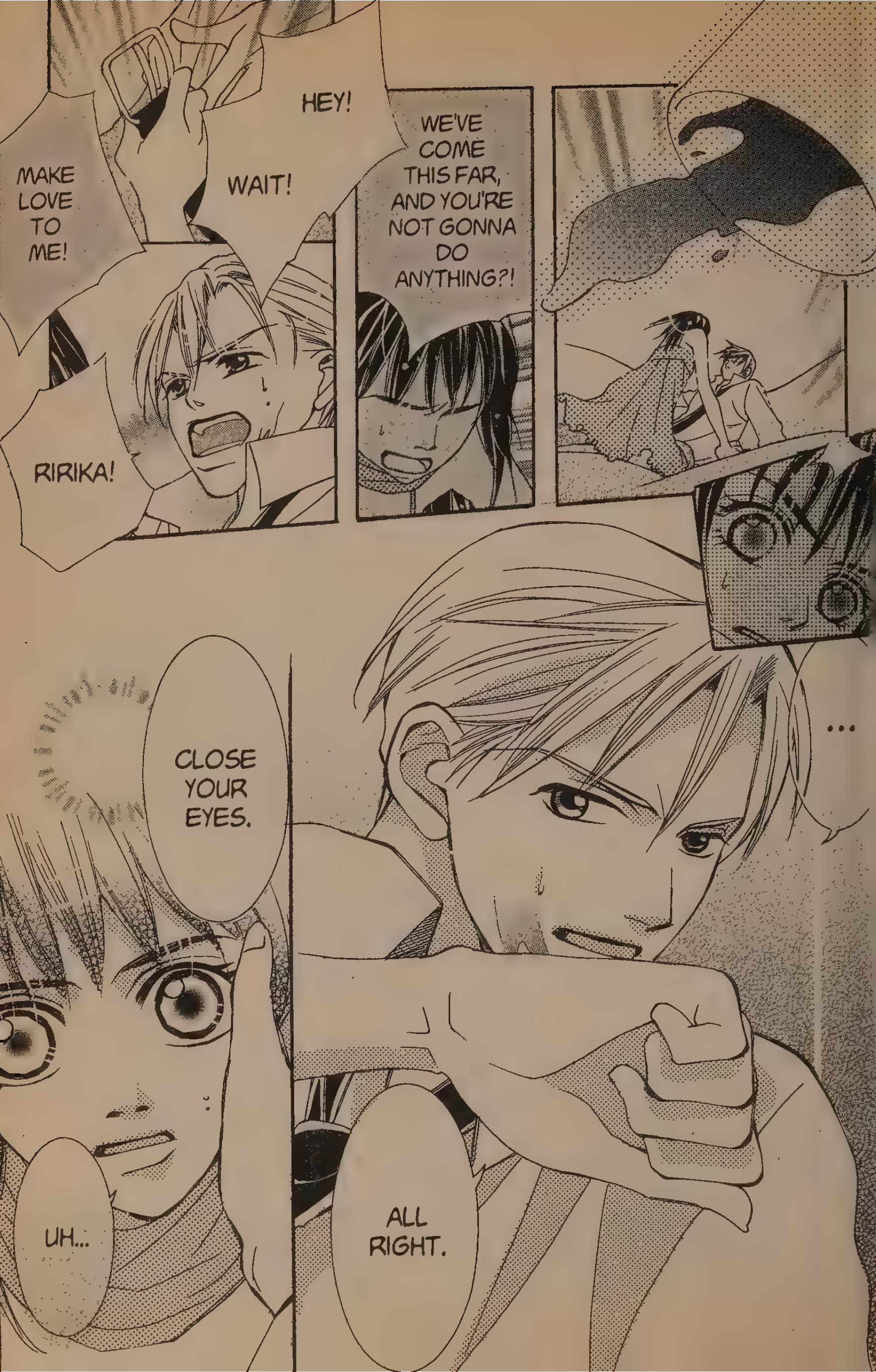

I WANT TO BECOME A WOMAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ...
YES, SO I'M NOT AFTER YOUR MONEY...
..."WORKING MAN."
WHAT I WANT IS AN "ADULT ELATION-SHIP."
WOW, THE NIGHT VIEW IS GORGEOUS!
THIS IS SO FUN. This cocktail is sweet.
THAT'S GOOD.
DAMN, I'M ACTING LIKE A HAPPY CHILD.
NOW THAT THE PRINCESS IS HAPPY, CAN I PLEASE HAVE MY RING BACK...
HEH
NEXT I WANT TO...

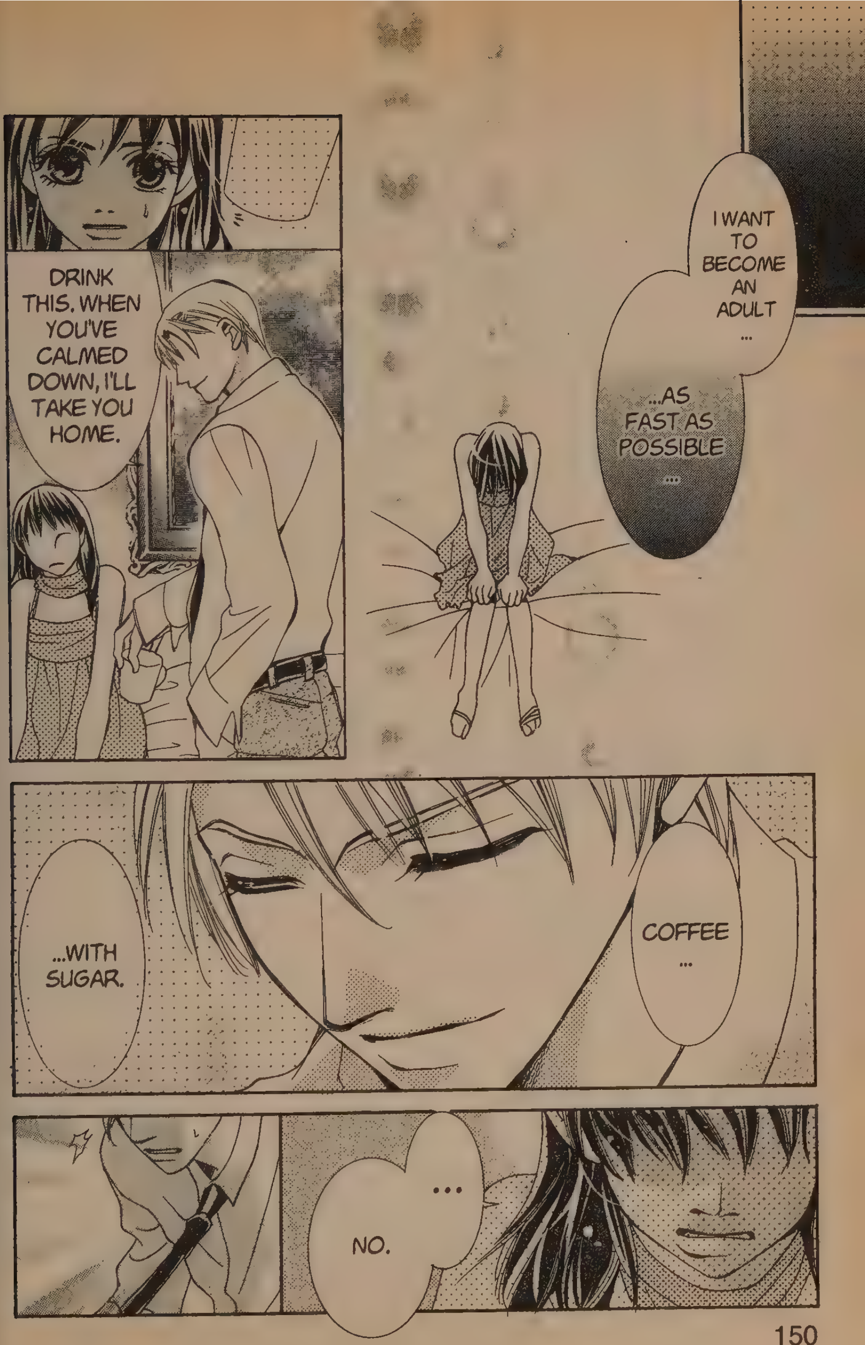

S- STOP...
!
I'M SORRY...
...TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
I TOLD YOU TO PLEASE NOT TALK TO OTHER GUYS, RIGHT?
IT MAKES ME WORRIED.
W- who's this guy?
Hey... he's... good... looking ♥
LET'S GO. I'LL HAVE A SUITE READY FOR YOU.

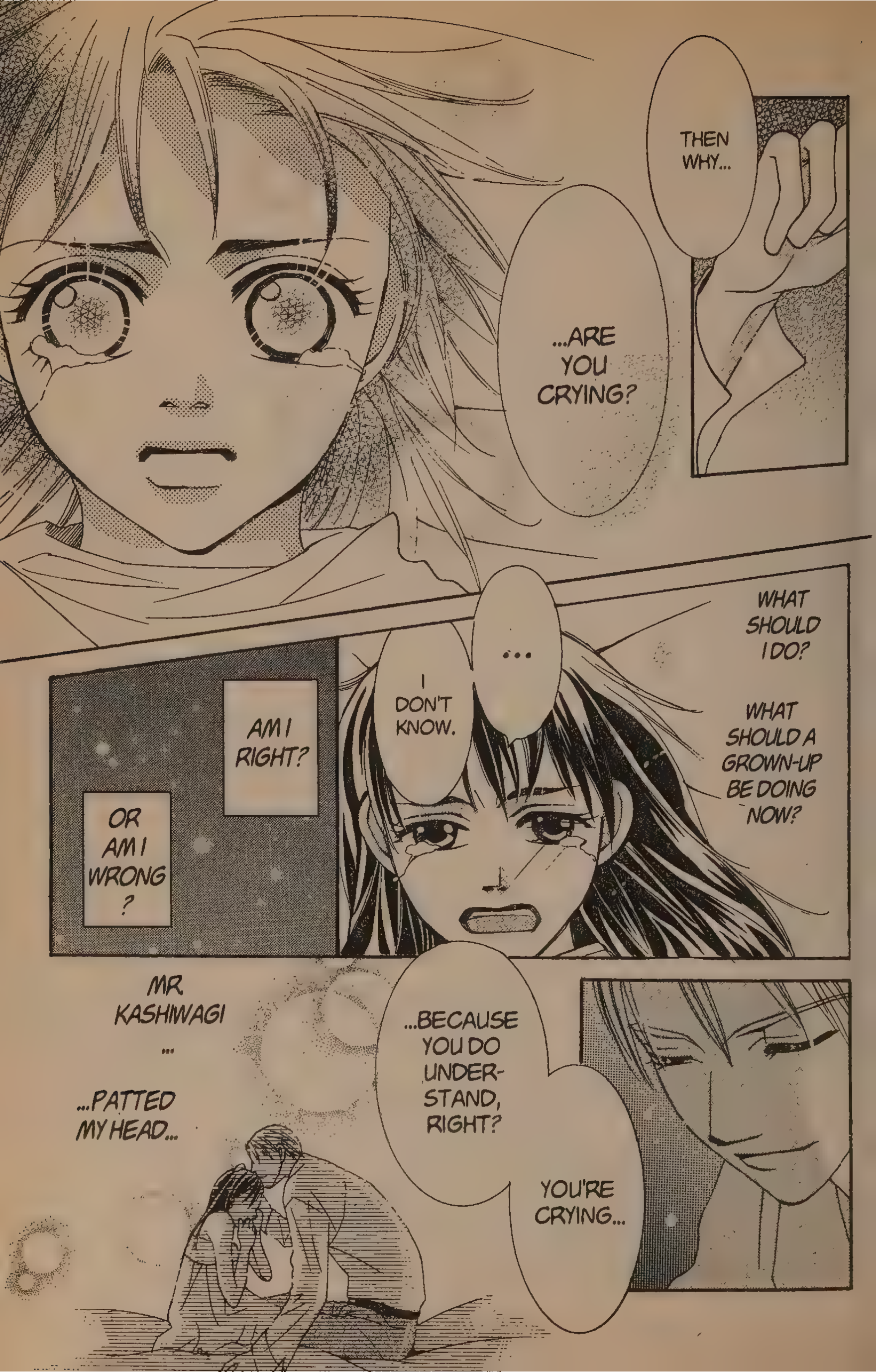

RIRIKA?
RIRIKA!
HEY! WHY'RE YOU HERE?
OH NO!
UM...
DID YOUR GUY...
...LEAVE YOU IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL AGAIN?
NO!
WHY DON'T YOU GO GET A GUY QUICK? THE ROOM WE USED IS STILL OPEN.
HEH
Hey, that's being too mean.

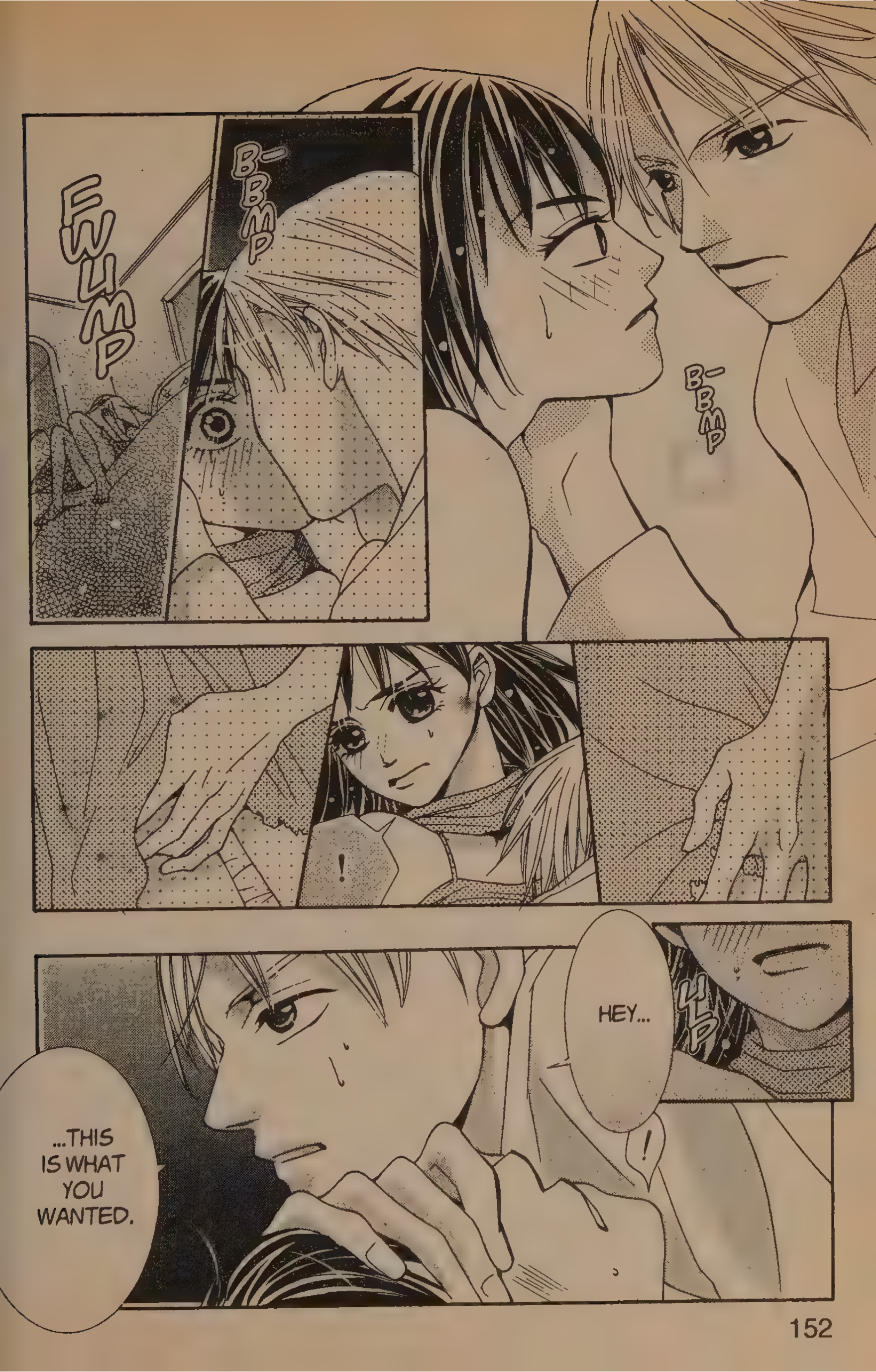

...
HE...
...WAS THE FIRST GUY...
...I EVER WENT OUT WITH.
...
I REALLY LIKED HIM.
I THOUGHT I COULD DO ANYTHING WITH HIM.
BUT WHEN WE WENT TO A HOTEL FOR THE FIRST TIME...
...I WAS AFRAID, AND COULDN'T ENTER THE ROOM...
"WHAT'S WITH YOU? THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO GO OUT WITH A KID LIKE YOU."
I REALLY LIKED HIM, SO...
I DON'T LIKE... HAVING SOMEONE I LIKE SAY THINGS LIKE THAT TO ME...

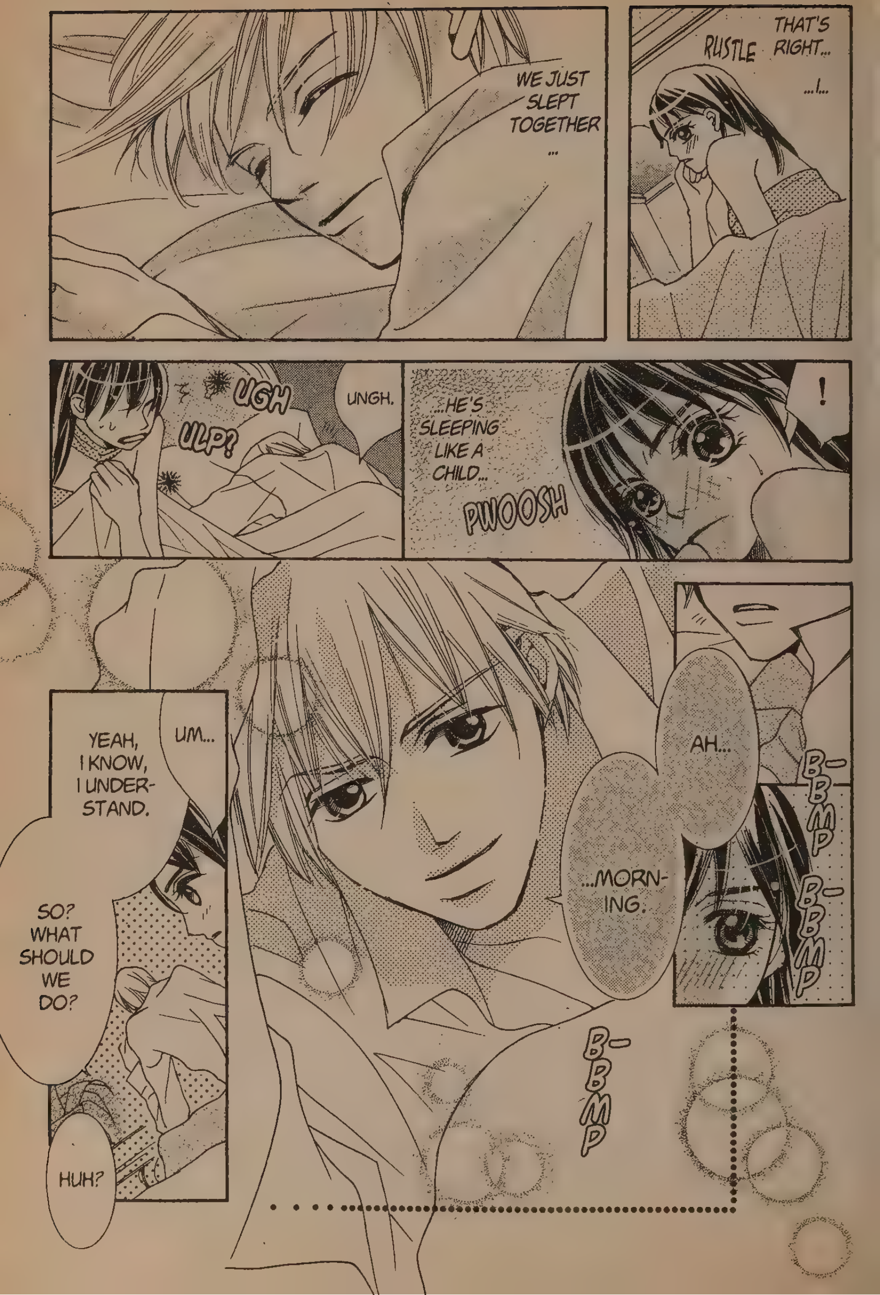

GRIP
A CHEAP HOTEL LIKE THIS...
...DOESN'T SUIT YOU.
UH...
VRRRRM
I lost.
SO...
SUITE
...ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY?
...

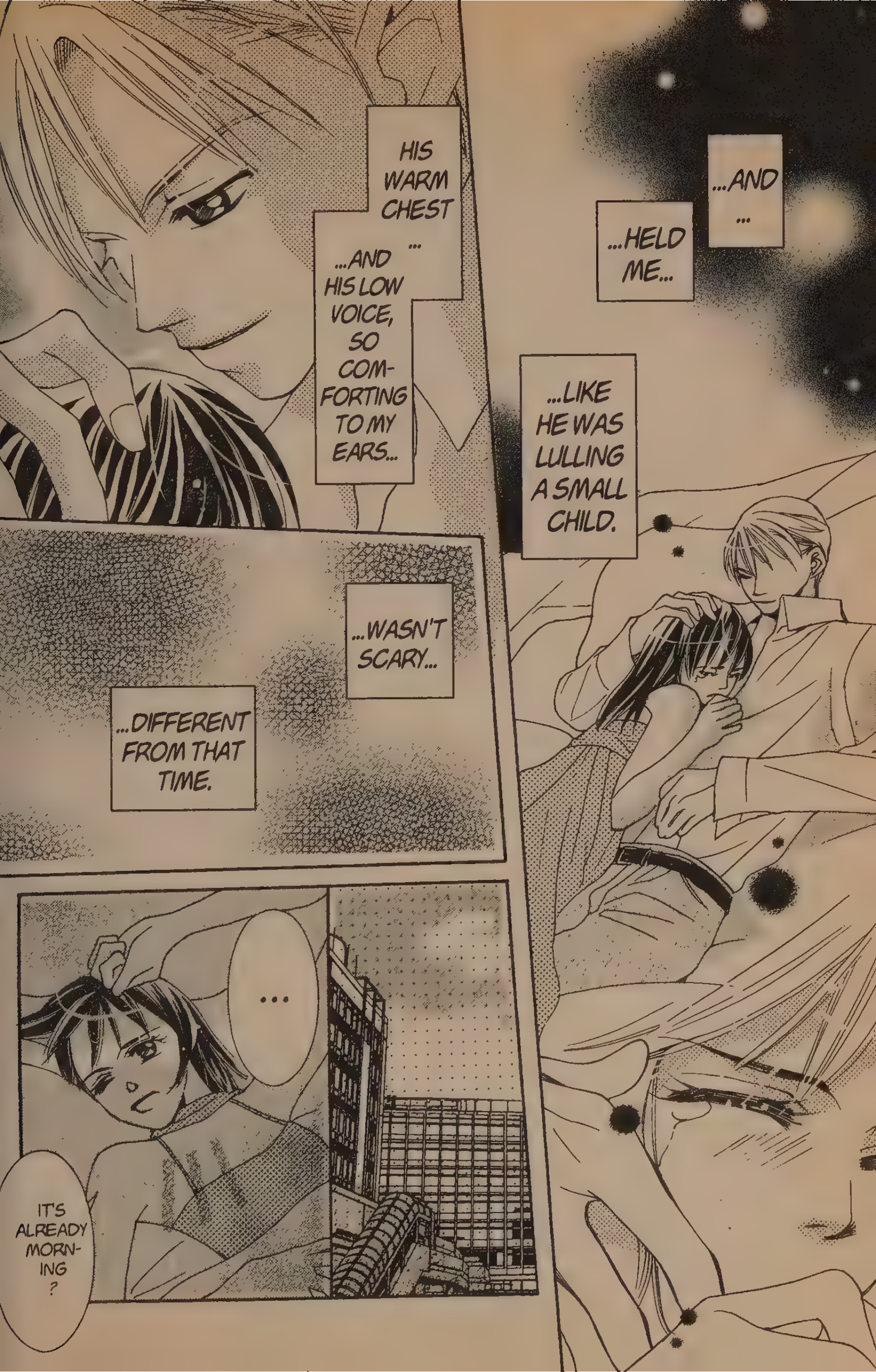

WE'VE COME THIS FAR, AND YOU'RE NOT GONNA DO ANYTHING?!
HEY!
WAIT!
MAKE LOVE TO ME!
RIRIKA!
...
ALL RIGHT.
CLOSE YOUR EYES.
UH...

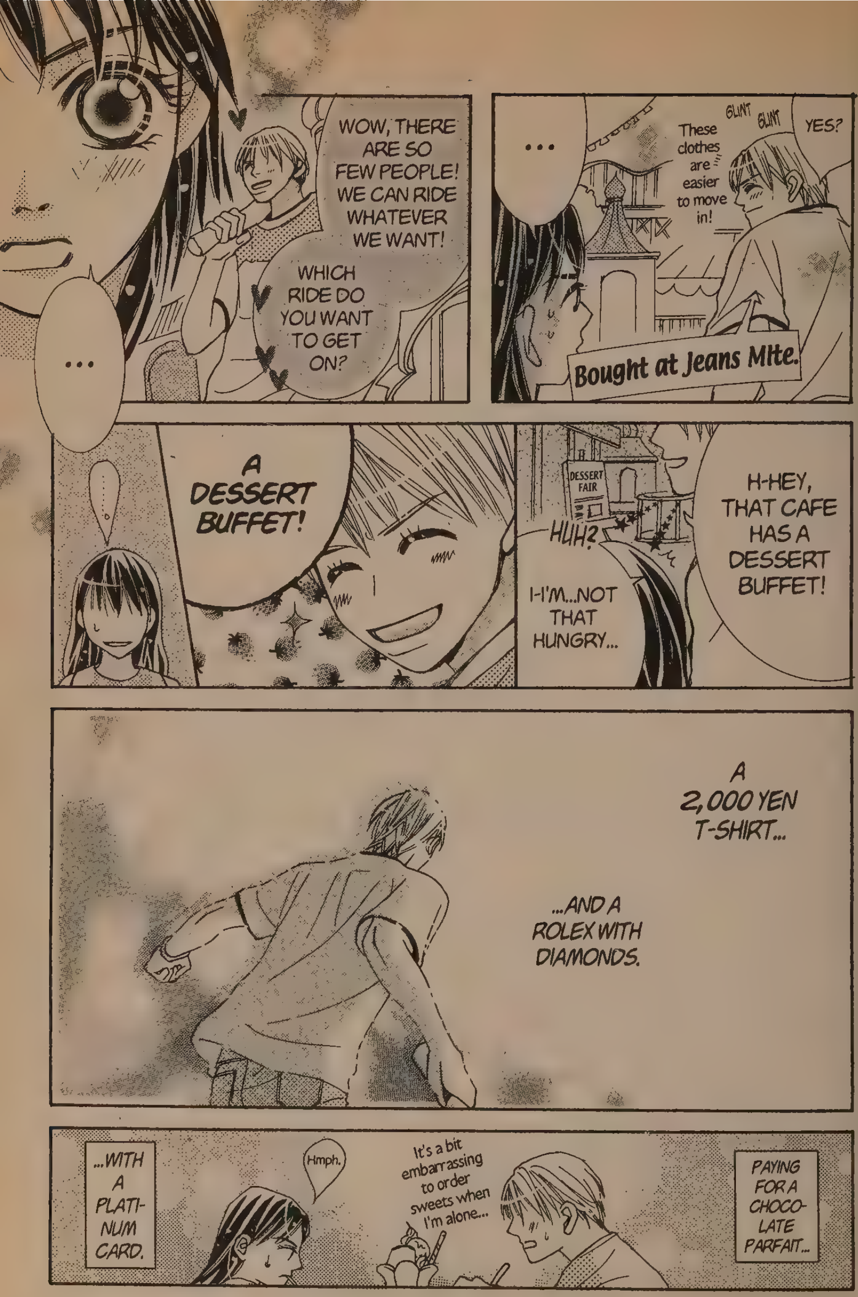

I WANT TO BECOME AN ADULT ...
...AS FAST AS POSSIBLE ...
DRINK THIS. WHEN YOU'VE CALMED DOWN, I'LL TAKE YOU HOME.
COFFEE ...
...WITH SUGAR.
...
NO.

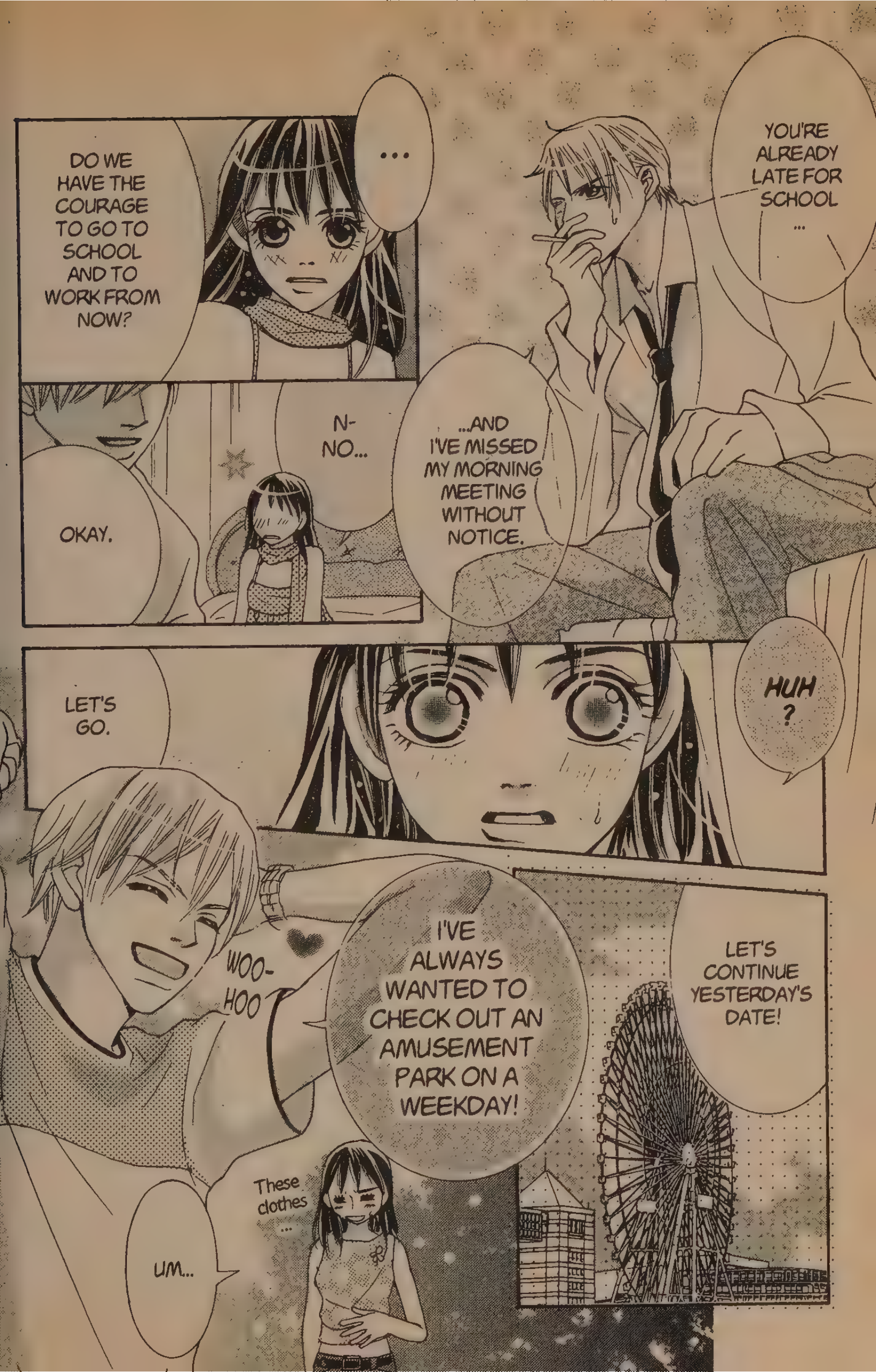

THEN WHY...
...ARE YOU CRYING?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD A GROWN-UP BE DOING NOW?
...
I DON'T KNOW.
AM I RIGHT?
OR AM I WRONG?
...BECAUSE YOU DO UNDERSTAND, RIGHT?
YOU'RE CRYING...
MR. KASHIWAGI...
...PATTED MY HEAD...

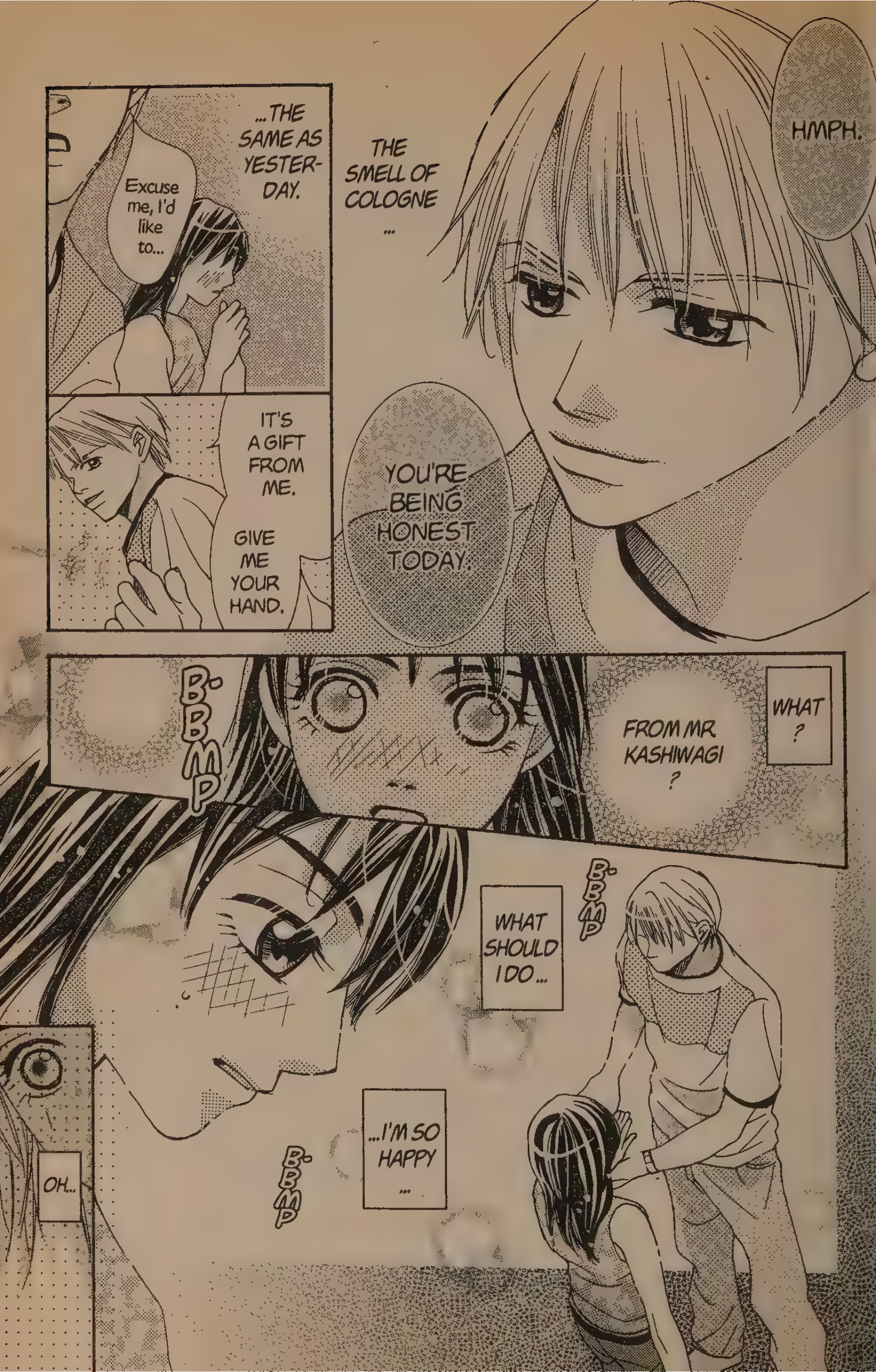

B-BMP
FWUMP
B-BMP
!
HEY...
GULP
!
...THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED.

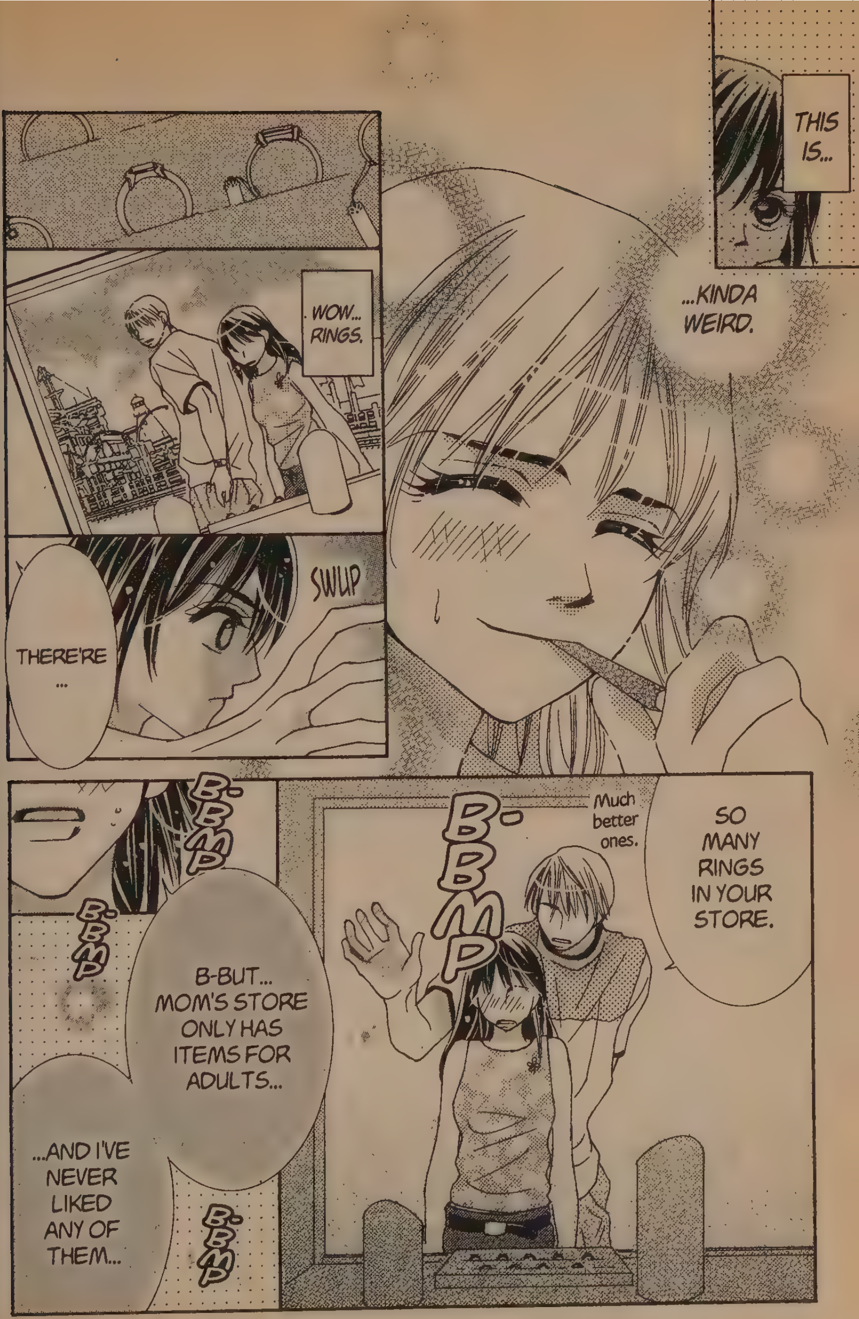

THAT'S RIGHT...
RUSTLE
...I...
WE JUST SLEPT TOGETHER ...
!
...HE'S SLEEPING LIKE A CHILD...
PWOOSH
UNGH.
UGH
ULP?
AH...
B-BBMP
B-BBMP
...MORNING.
B-BBMP
UM...
YEAH, I KNOW, I UNDERSTAND.
SO? WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
HUH?

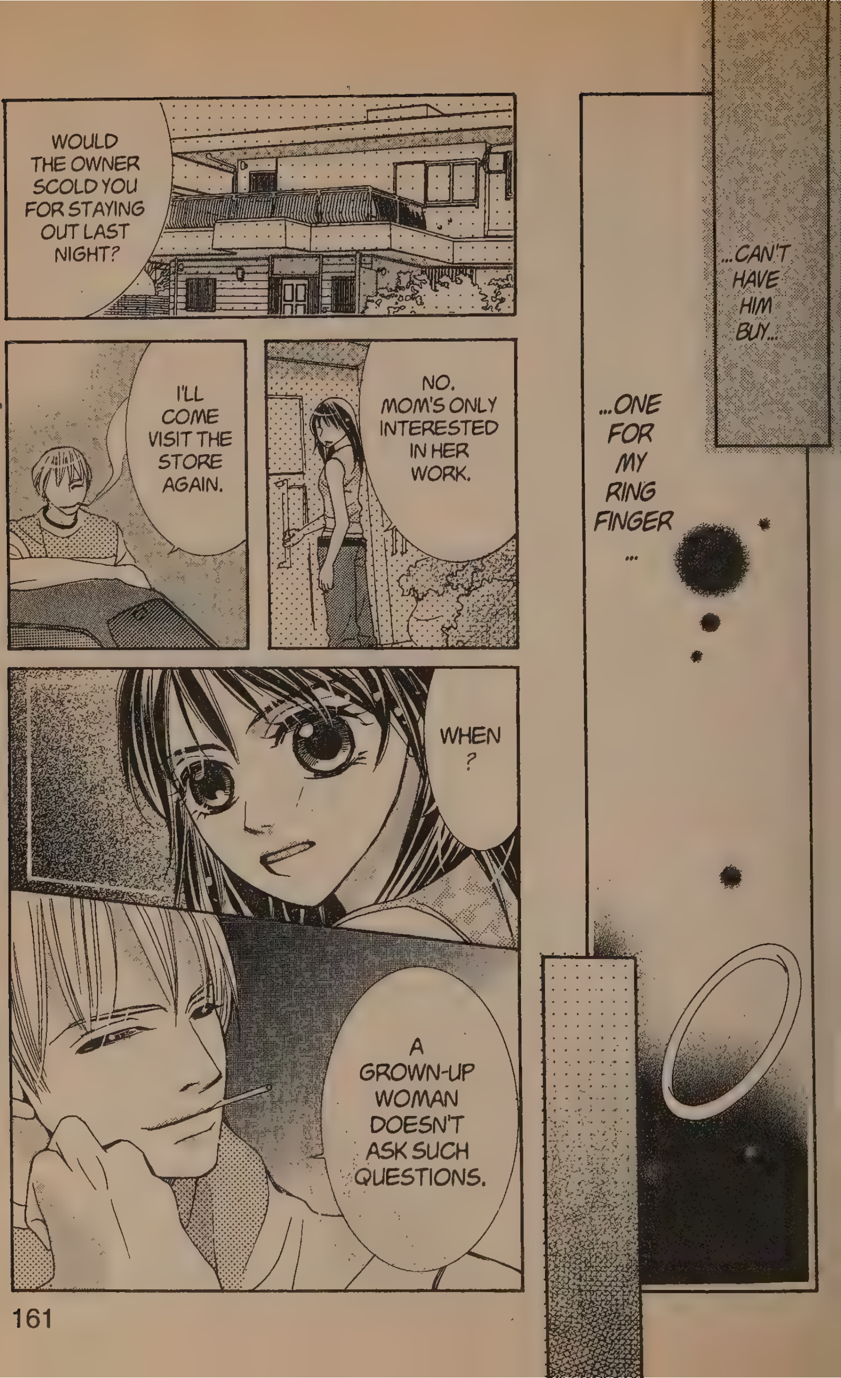

HIS WARM CHEST ...
...AND HIS LOW VOICE, SO COMFORTING TO MY EARS...
...AND ...
...HELD ME...
...LIKE HE WAS LULLING A SMALL CHILD.
...WASN'T SCARY...
...DIFFERENT FROM THAT TIME.
...
IT'S ALREADY MORNING ?

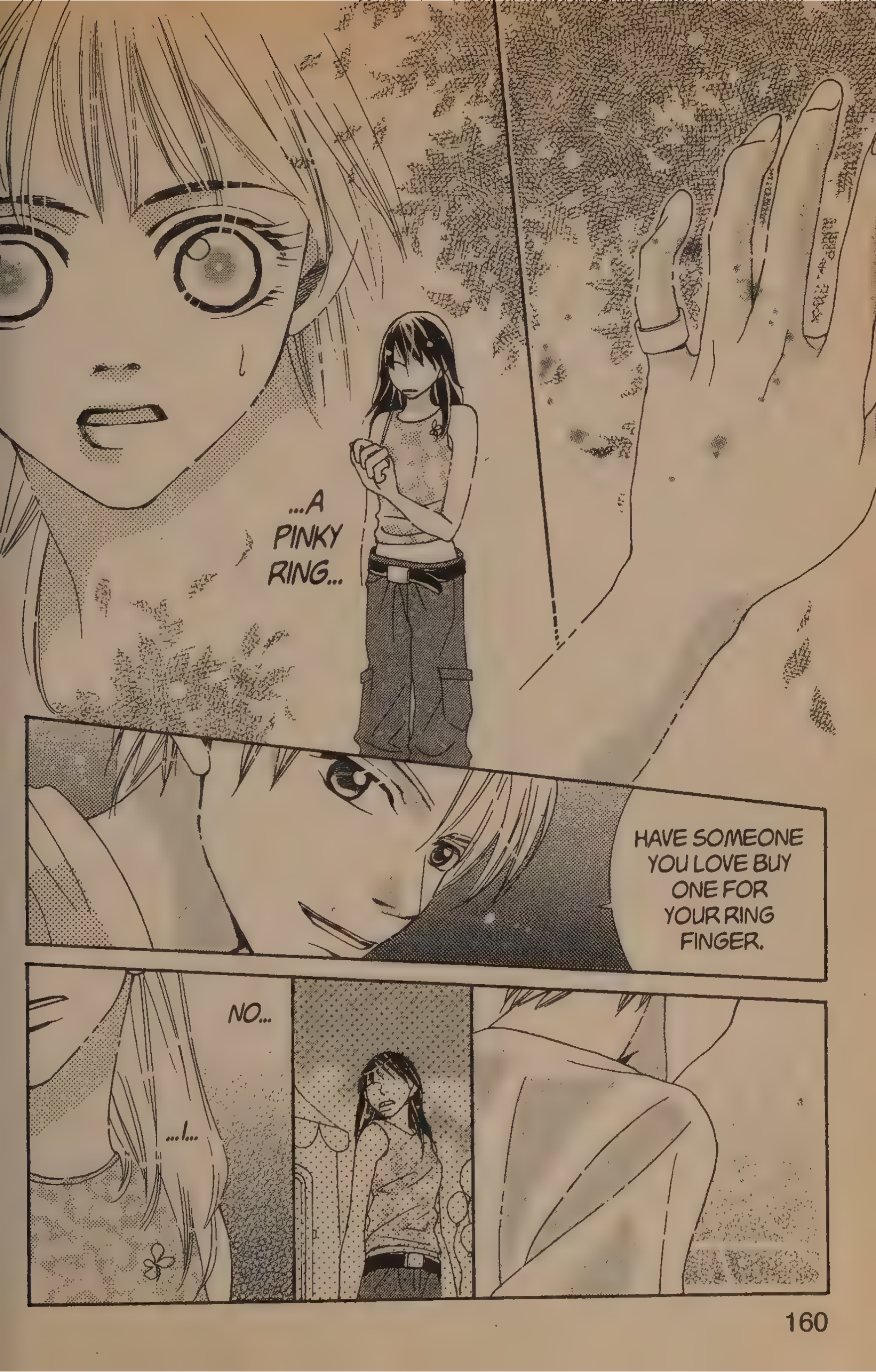

YES?
GLINT GLINT
These clothes are easier to move in!
...
Bought at Jeans Mite.
WOW, THERE ARE SO FEW PEOPLE! WE CAN RIDE WHATEVER WE WANT!
WHICH RIDE DO YOU WANT TO GET ON?
...
H-HEY, THAT CAFE HAS A DESSERT BUFFET!
DESSERT FAIR
HUH?
I-I'M...NOT THAT HUNGRY...
A DESSERT BUFFET!
!
A 2,000 YEN T-SHIRT...
...AND A ROLEX WITH DIAMONDS.
PAYING FOR A CHOCOLATE PARFAIT...
It's a bit embarrassing to order sweets when I'm alone...
Hmph.
...WITH A PLATINUM CARD.

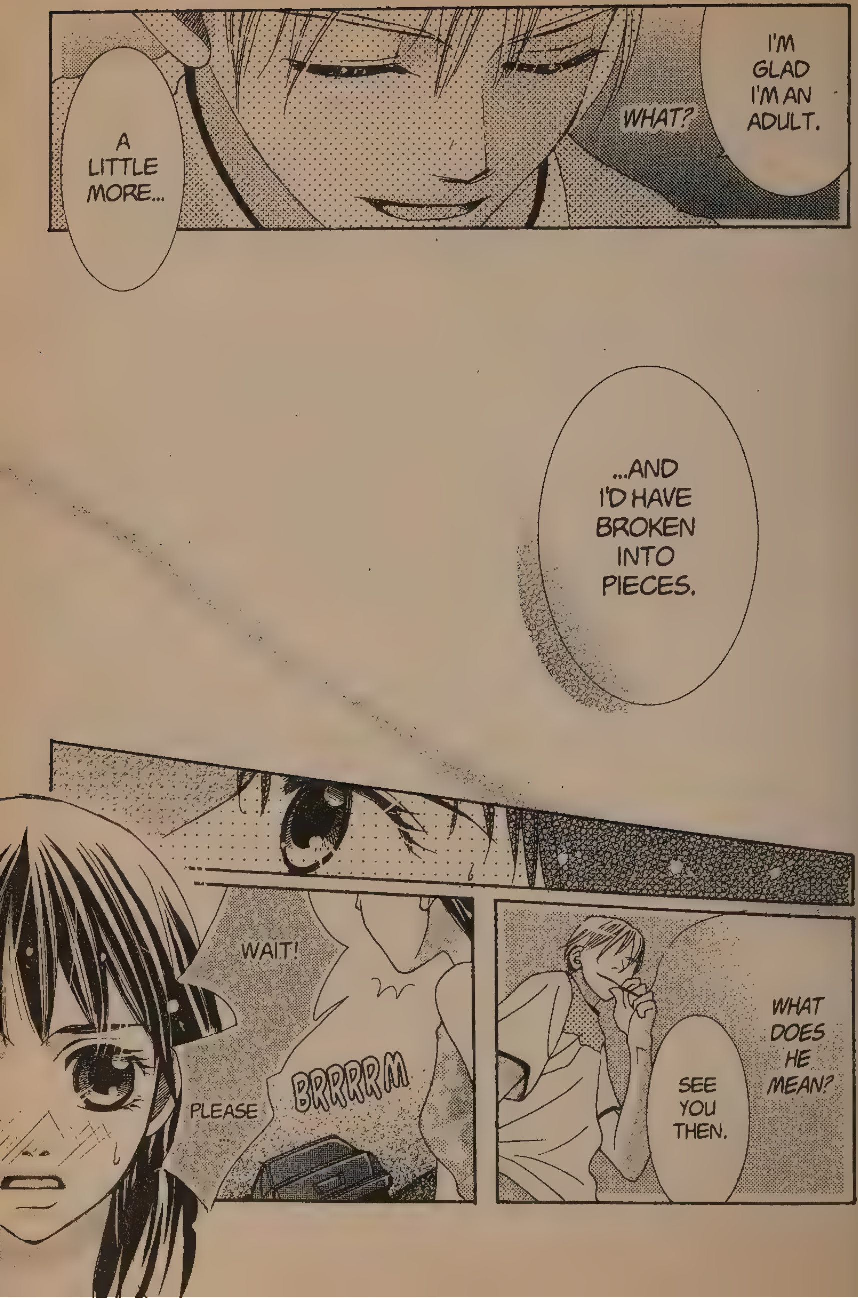

YOU'RE ALREADY LATE FOR SCHOOL ...
...AND I'VE MISSED MY MORNING MEETING WITHOUT NOTICE.
...
DO WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO GO TO SCHOOL AND TO WORK FROM NOW?
N-NO...
OKAY.
HUH?
LET'S GO.
LET'S CONTINUE YESTERDAY'S DATE!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO CHECK OUT AN AMUSEMENT PARK ON A WEEKDAY!
WOO-HOO
These clothes ...
UM...

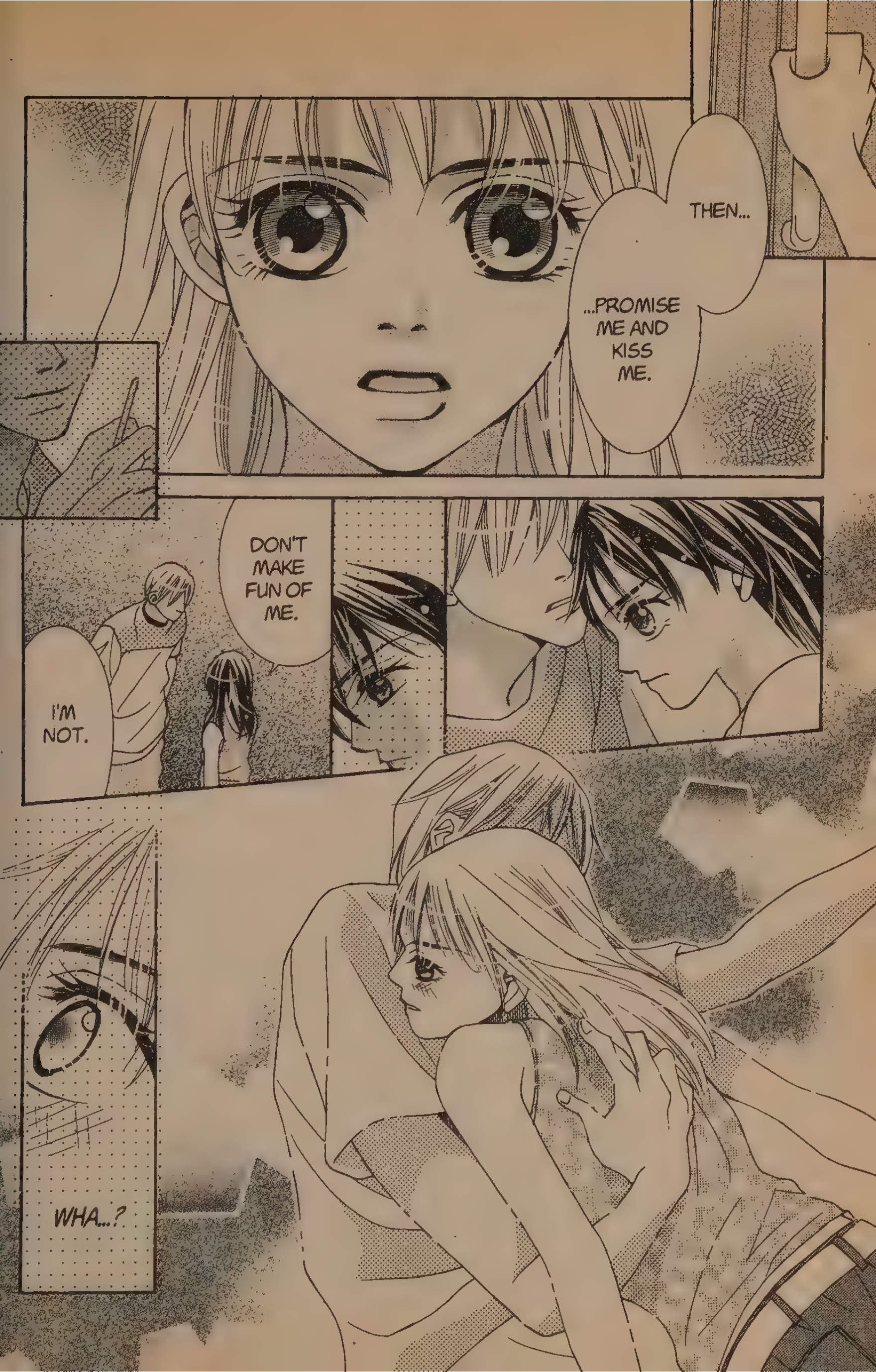

HMPH.
THE SMELL OF COLOGNE ...
...THE SAME AS YESTERDAY.
Excuse me, I'd like to...
YOU'RE BEING HONEST TODAY.
IT'S A GIFT FROM ME.
GIVE ME YOUR HAND.
WHAT ?
FROM MR. KASHIWAGI ?
B-BMP
B-BMP
WHAT SHOULD I DO...
...I'M SO HAPPY ...
B-BMP
OH...

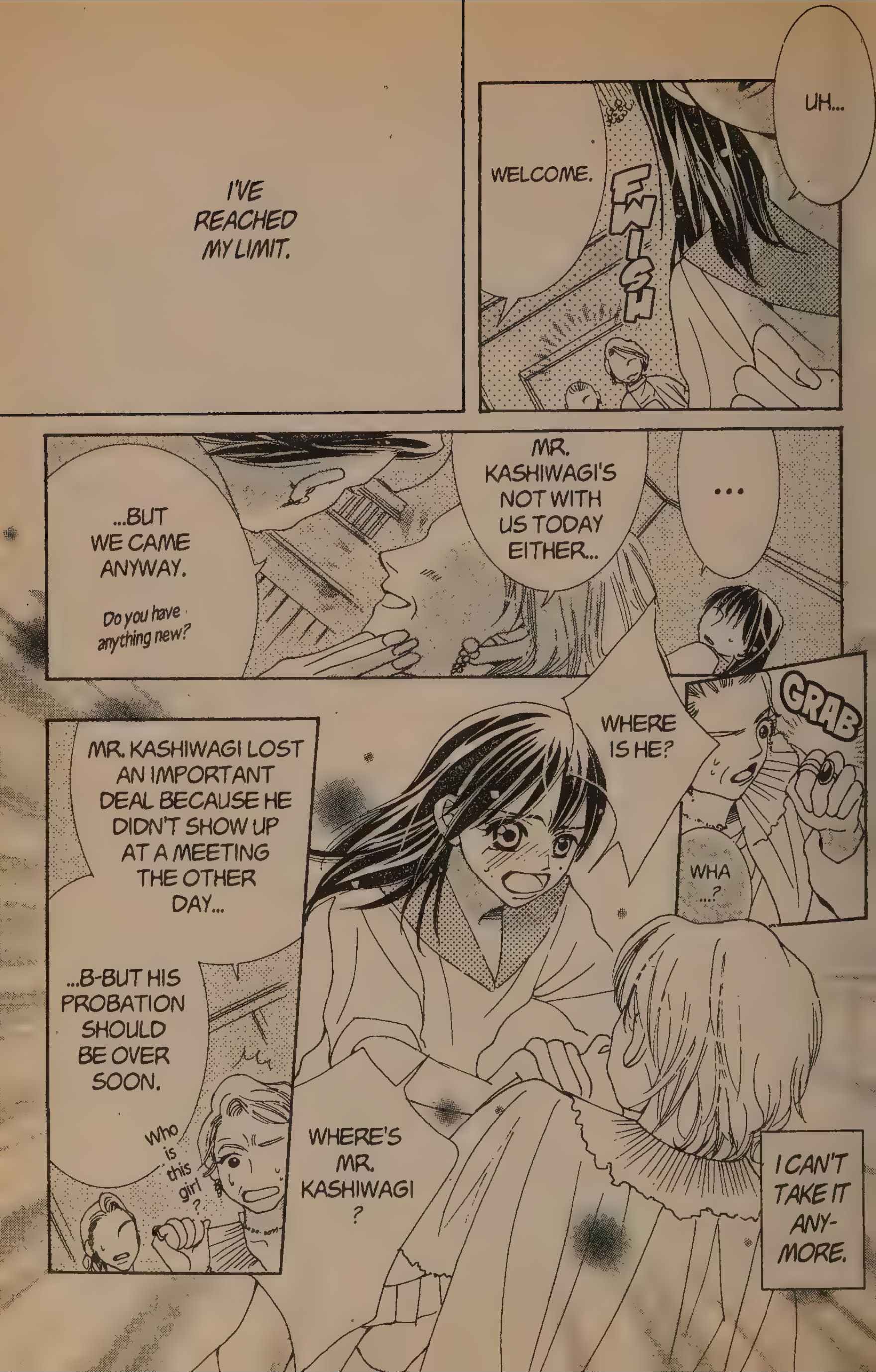

THIS IS...
...KINDA WEIRD.
WOW... RINGS.
SWUP
THERE'RE ...
SO MANY RINGS IN YOUR STORE.
Much better ones.
B-BMP
B-BMP
B-BUT... MOM'S STORE ONLY HAS ITEMS FOR ADULTS...
B-BMP
...AND I'VE NEVER LIKED ANY OF THEM...
B-BMP

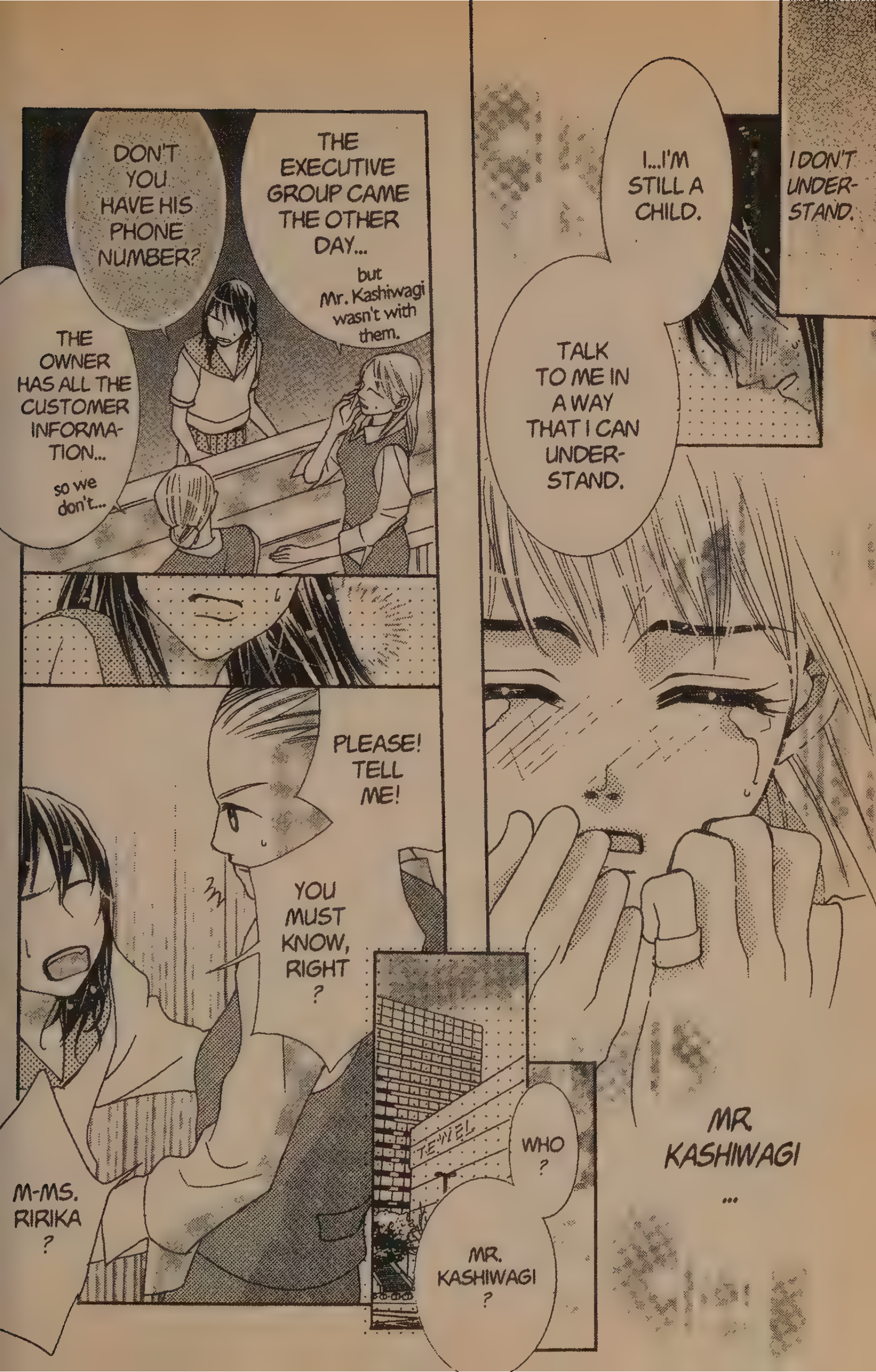

...CAN'T HAVE HIM BUY...
...ONE FOR MY RING FINGER...
WOULD THE OWNER SCOLD YOU FOR STAYING OUT LAST NIGHT?
NO. MOM'S ONLY INTERESTED IN HER WORK.
I'LL COME VISIT THE STORE AGAIN.
WHEN?
A GROWN-UP WOMAN DOESN'T ASK SUCH QUESTIONS.

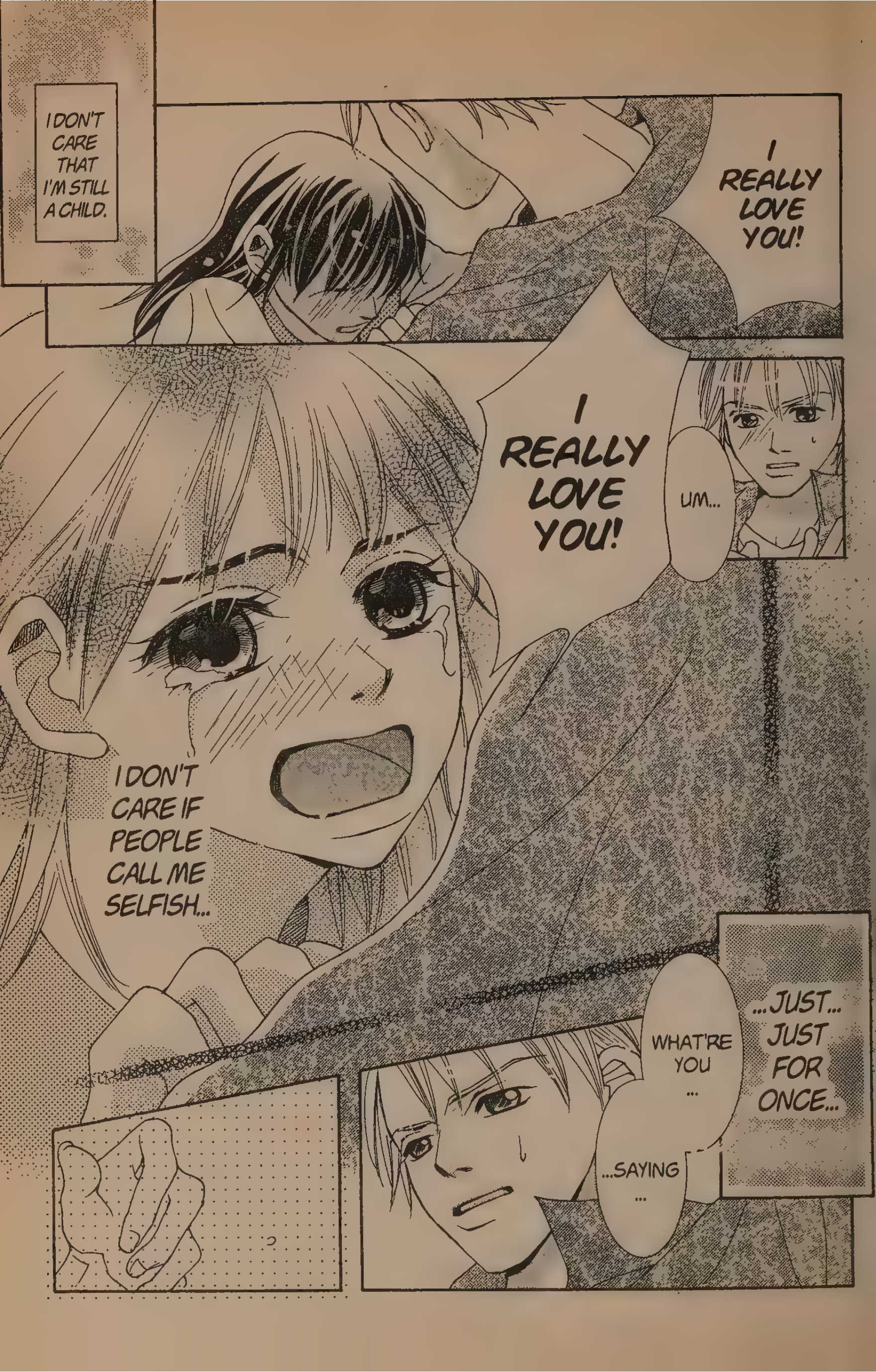

...A PINKY RING...
HAVE SOMEONE YOU LOVE BUY ONE FOR YOUR RING FINGER.
NO...
...I...

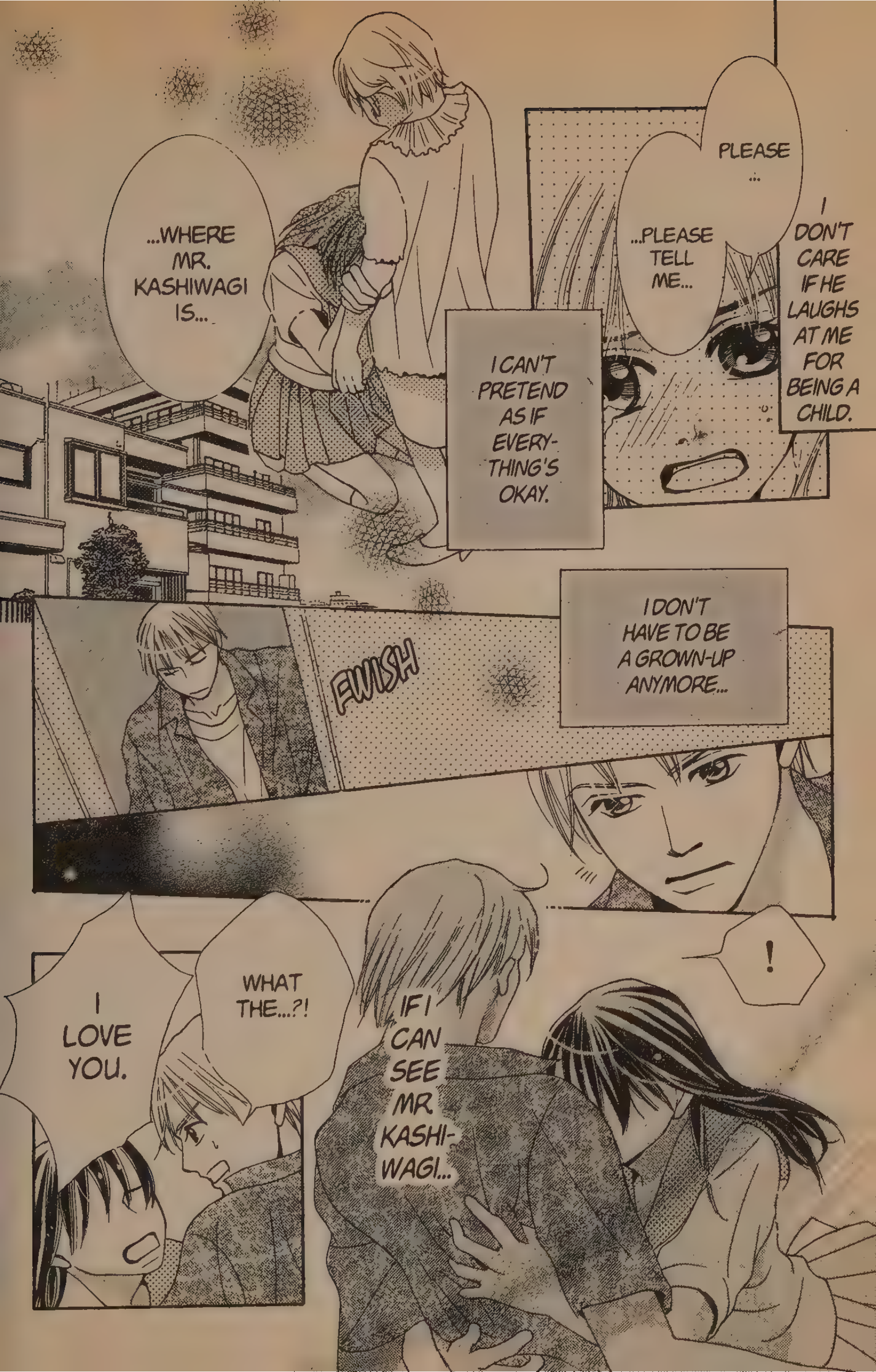

I'M GLAD I'M AN ADULT.
WHAT?
A LITTLE MORE...
...AND I'D HAVE BROKEN INTO PIECES.
WHAT DOES HE MEAN?
SEE YOU THEN.
WAIT!
PLEASE ...
BRRRRM

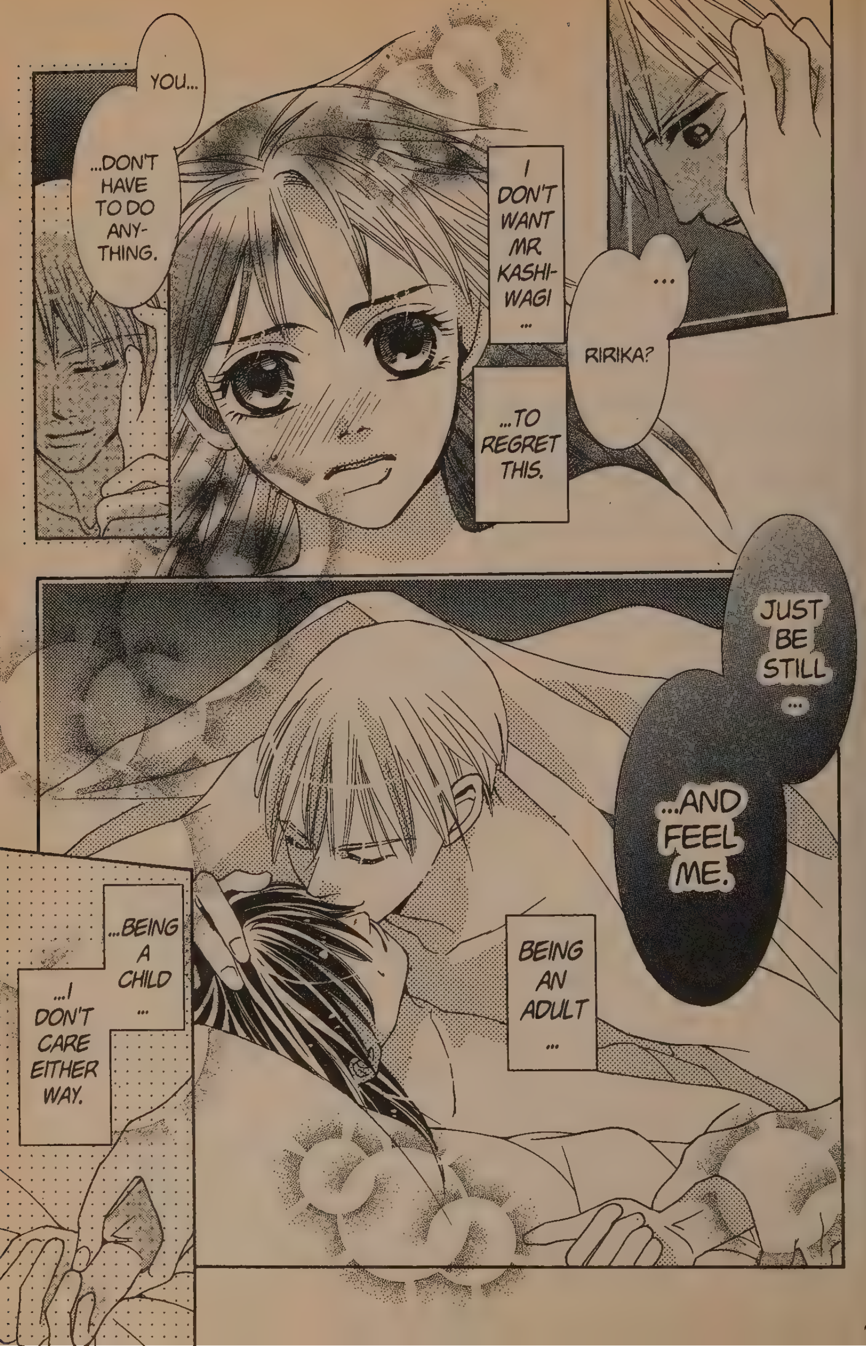

THEN...
...PROMISE ME AND KISS ME.
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME.
I'M NOT.
WHA...?

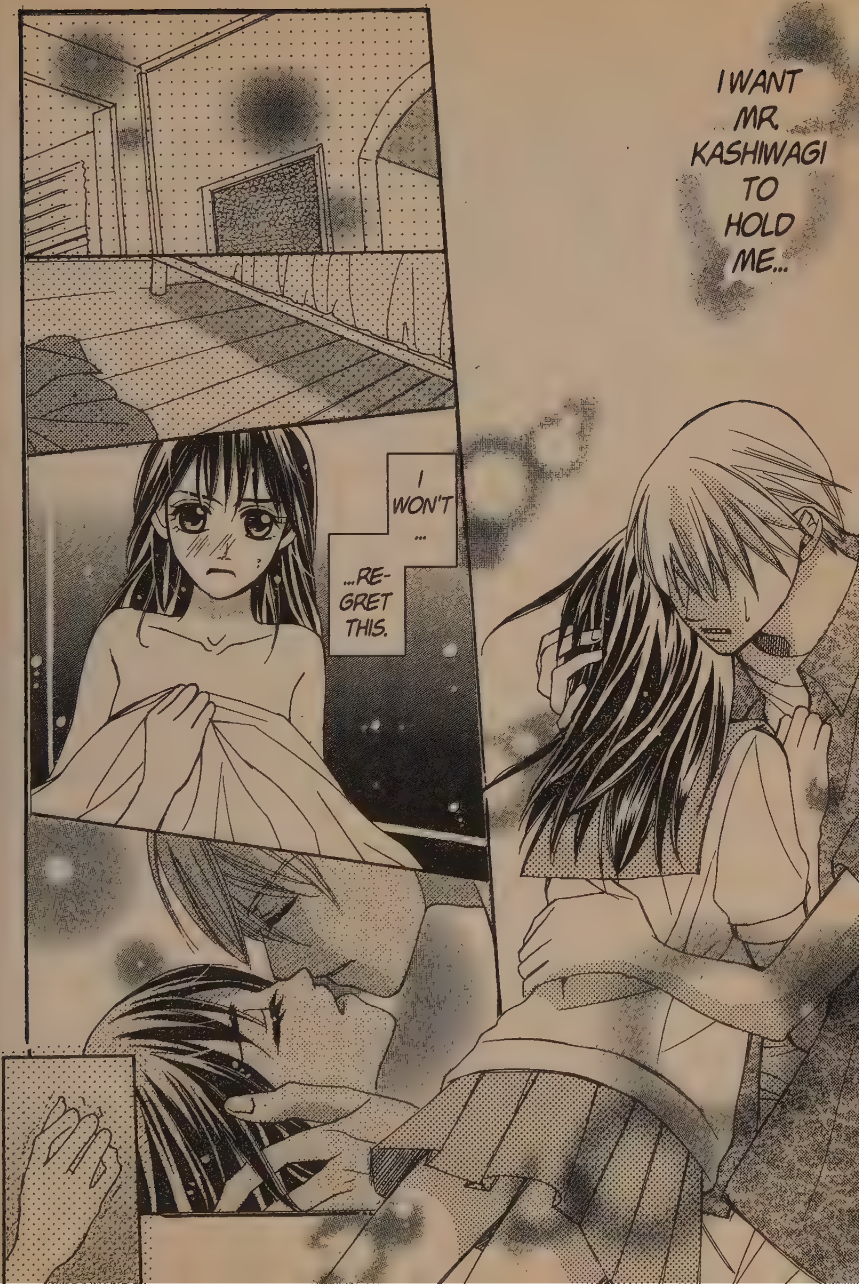

UH...
WELCOME.
FWISH
I'VE REACHED MY LIMIT.
...
MR. KASHIWAGI'S NOT WITH US TODAY EITHER...
...BUT WE CAME ANYWAY.
Do you have anything new?
GRAB
WHERE IS HE?
WHA ...?
MR. KASHIWAGI LOST AN IMPORTANT DEAL BECAUSE HE DIDN'T SHOW UP AT A MEETING THE OTHER DAY...
...B-BUT HIS PROBATION SHOULD BE OVER SOON.
Who is this girl?
WHERE'S MR. KASHIWAGI?
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE.

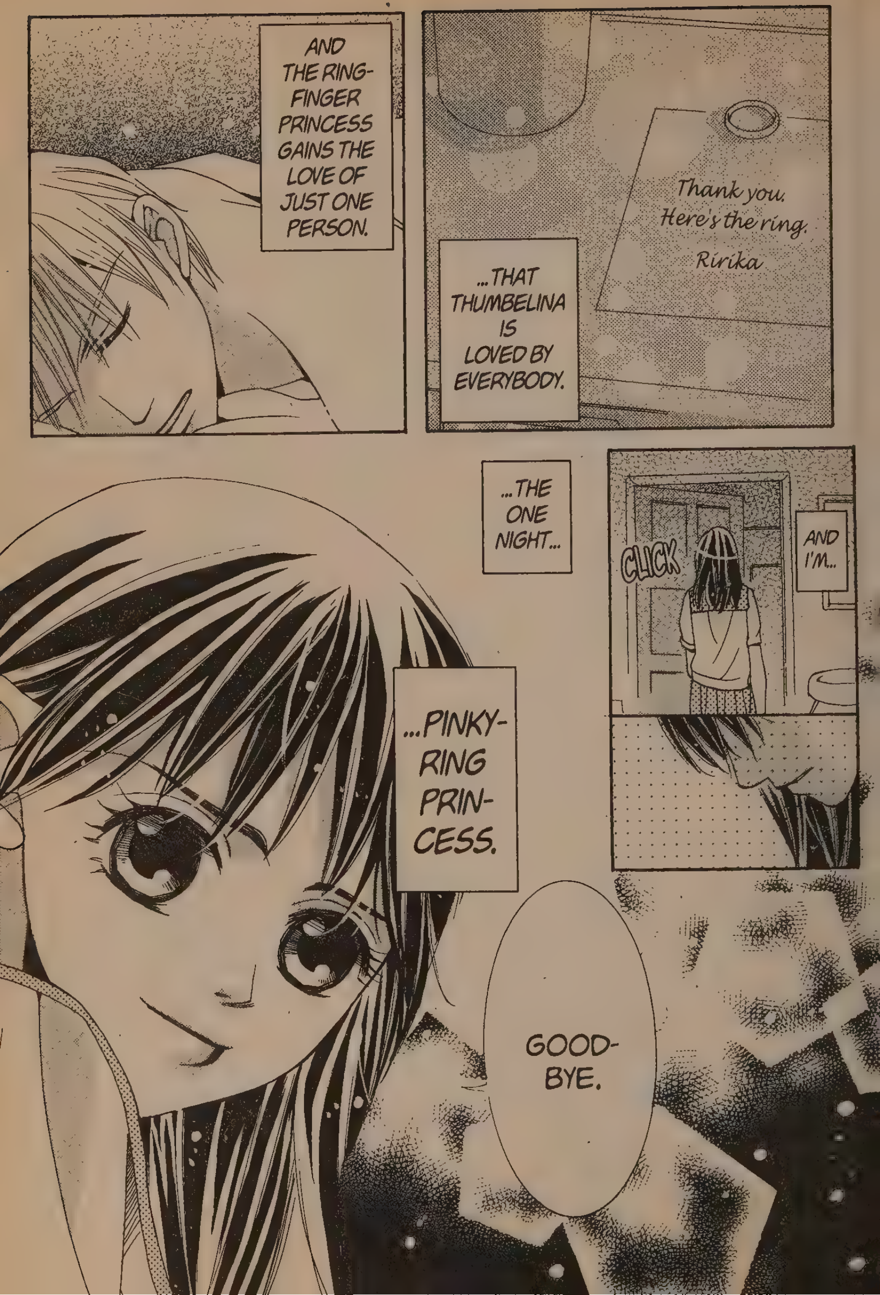

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I...I'M STILL A CHILD.
TALK TO ME IN A WAY THAT I CAN UNDERSTAND.
THE EXECUTIVE GROUP CAME THE OTHER DAY... but Mr. Kashiwagi wasn't with them.
DON'T YOU HAVE HIS PHONE NUMBER?
THE OWNER HAS ALL THE CUSTOMER INFORMATION... so we don't...
PLEASE! TELL ME!
YOU MUST KNOW, RIGHT?
M-MS. RIRIKA?
MR. KASHIWAGI ...
JEWEL
WHO?
MR. KASHIWAGI?

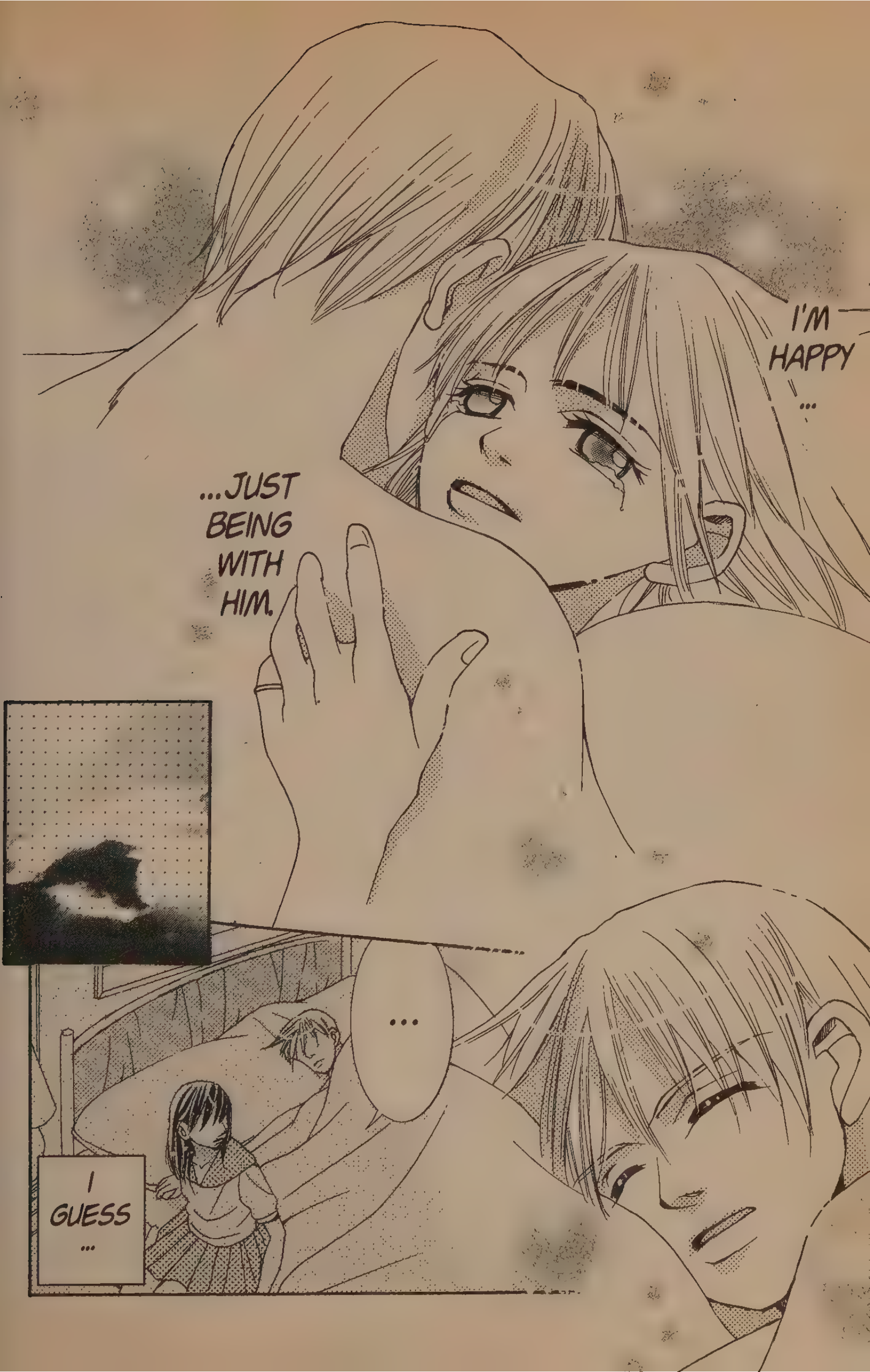

I REALLY LOVE YOU!
I DON'T CARE THAT I'M STILL A CHILD.
UM...
I REALLY LOVE YOU!
I DON'T CARE IF PEOPLE CALL ME SELFISH...
...JUST... JUST FOR ONCE...
WHAT'RE YOU ...
...SAYING ...

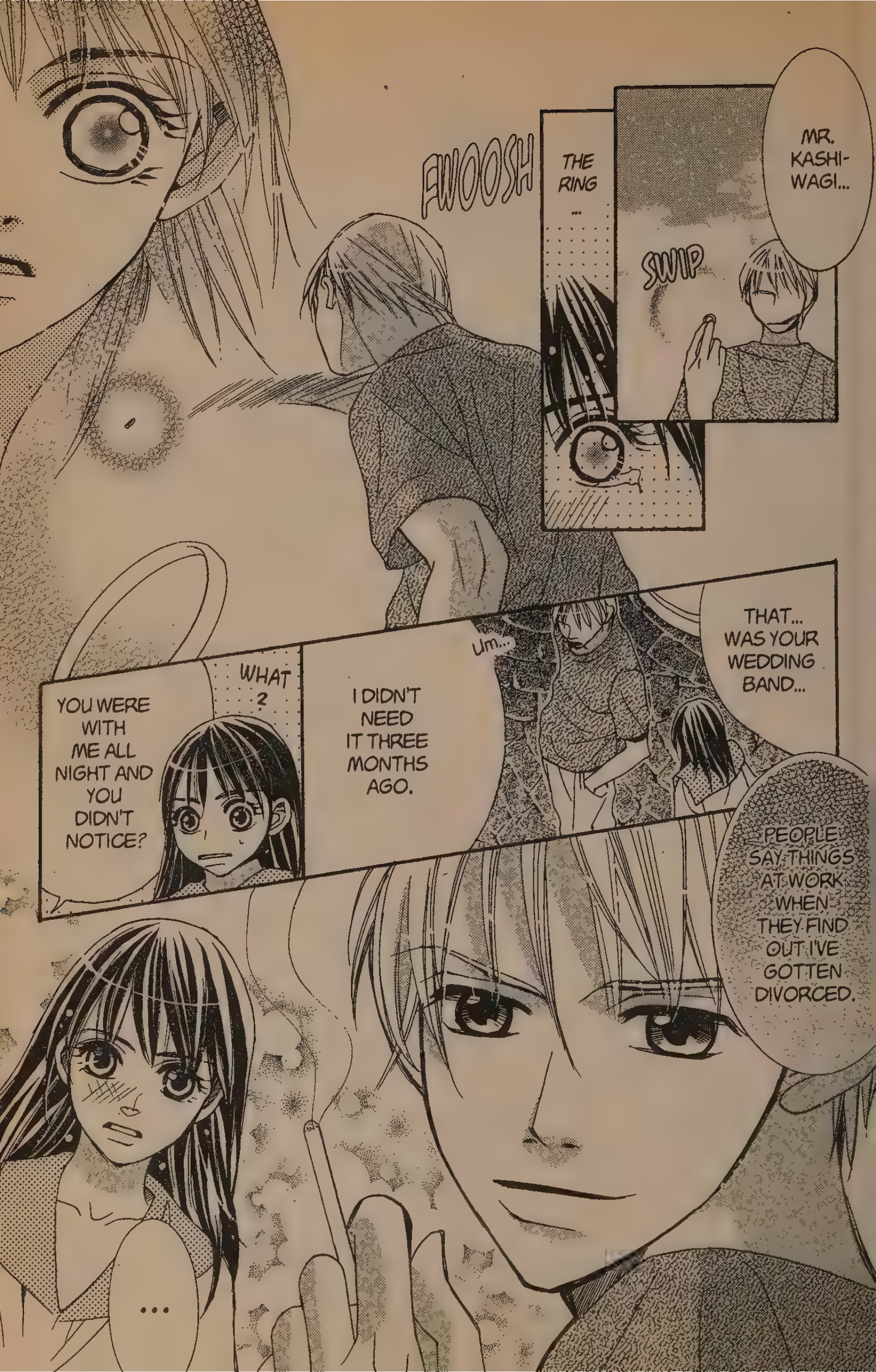

PLEASE ...
...PLEASE TELL ME...
I DON'T CARE IF HE LAUGHS AT ME FOR BEING A CHILD.
I CAN'T PRETEND AS IF EVERYTHING'S OKAY.
...WHERE MR. KASHIWAGI IS...
I DON'T HAVE TO BE A GROWN-UP ANYMORE...
FWISH
!
IF I CAN SEE MR. KASHIWAGI...
WHAT THE...?!
I LOVE YOU.

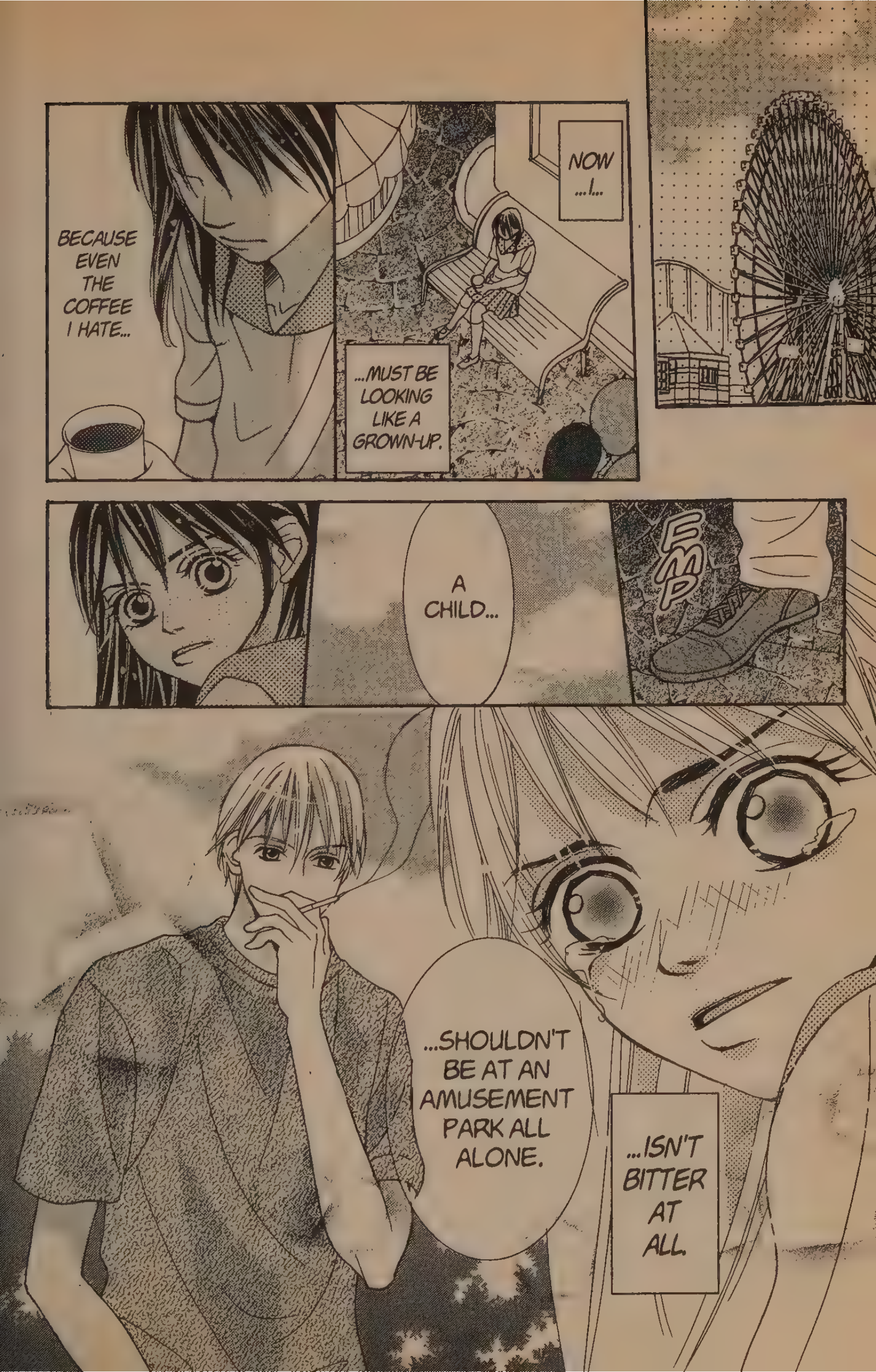

...
RIRIKA?
I DON'T WANT MR. KASHIWAGI...
...TO REGRET THIS.
YOU...
...DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING.
JUST BE STILL...
...AND FEEL ME.
BEING AN ADULT...
...BEING A CHILD...
...I DON'T CARE EITHER WAY.

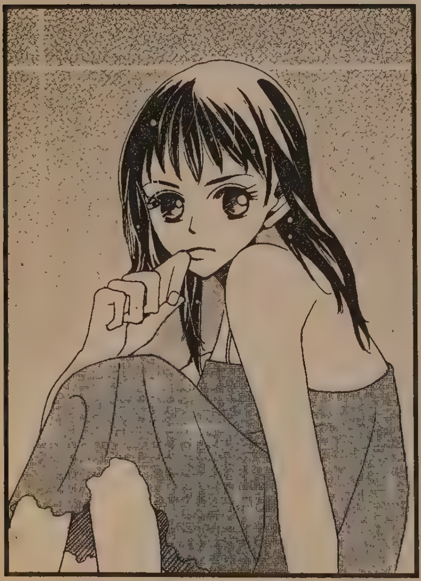

I WANT MR. KASHIWAGI TO HOLD ME...
I WON'T...
...REGRET THIS.

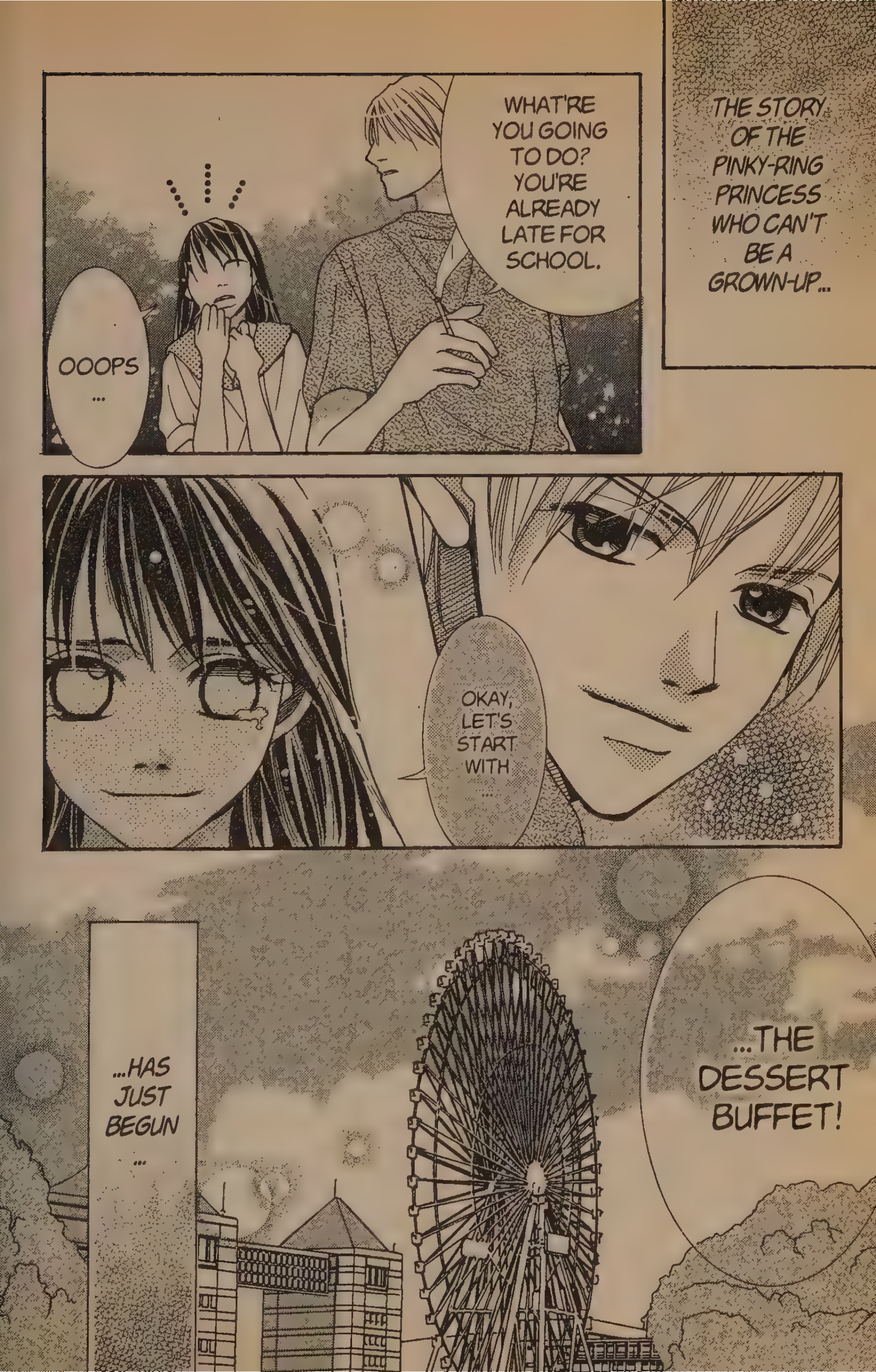

Thank you.
Here's the ring.
Ririka
...THAT THUMBELINA IS LOVED BY EVERYBODY.
AND THE RING-FINGER PRINCESS GAINS THE LOVE OF JUST ONE PERSON.
AND I'M...
CLICK
...THE ONE NIGHT...
...PINKY-RING PRINCESS.
GOOD-BYE.

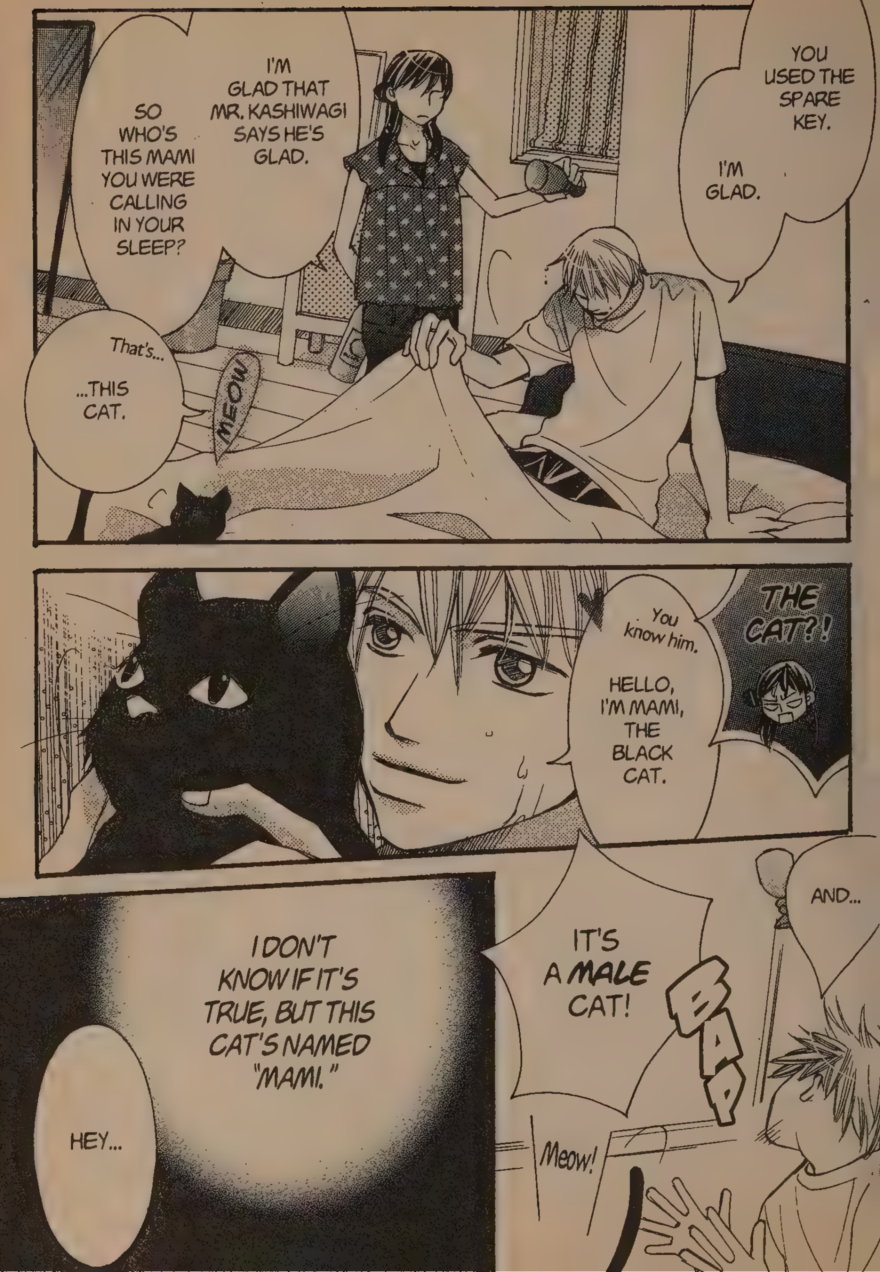

I'M HAPPY ...
...JUST BEING WITH HIM.
...
I GUESS ...


MR. KASHIWAGI...
SWIP
THE RING ...
FWOOSH
THAT... WAS YOUR WEDDING BAND...
Um...
I DIDN'T NEED IT THREE MONTHS AGO.
WHAT ?
YOU WERE WITH ME ALL NIGHT AND YOU DIDN'T NOTICE?
PEOPLE SAY THINGS AT WORK WHEN THEY FIND OUT I'VE GOTTEN DIVORCED.
...

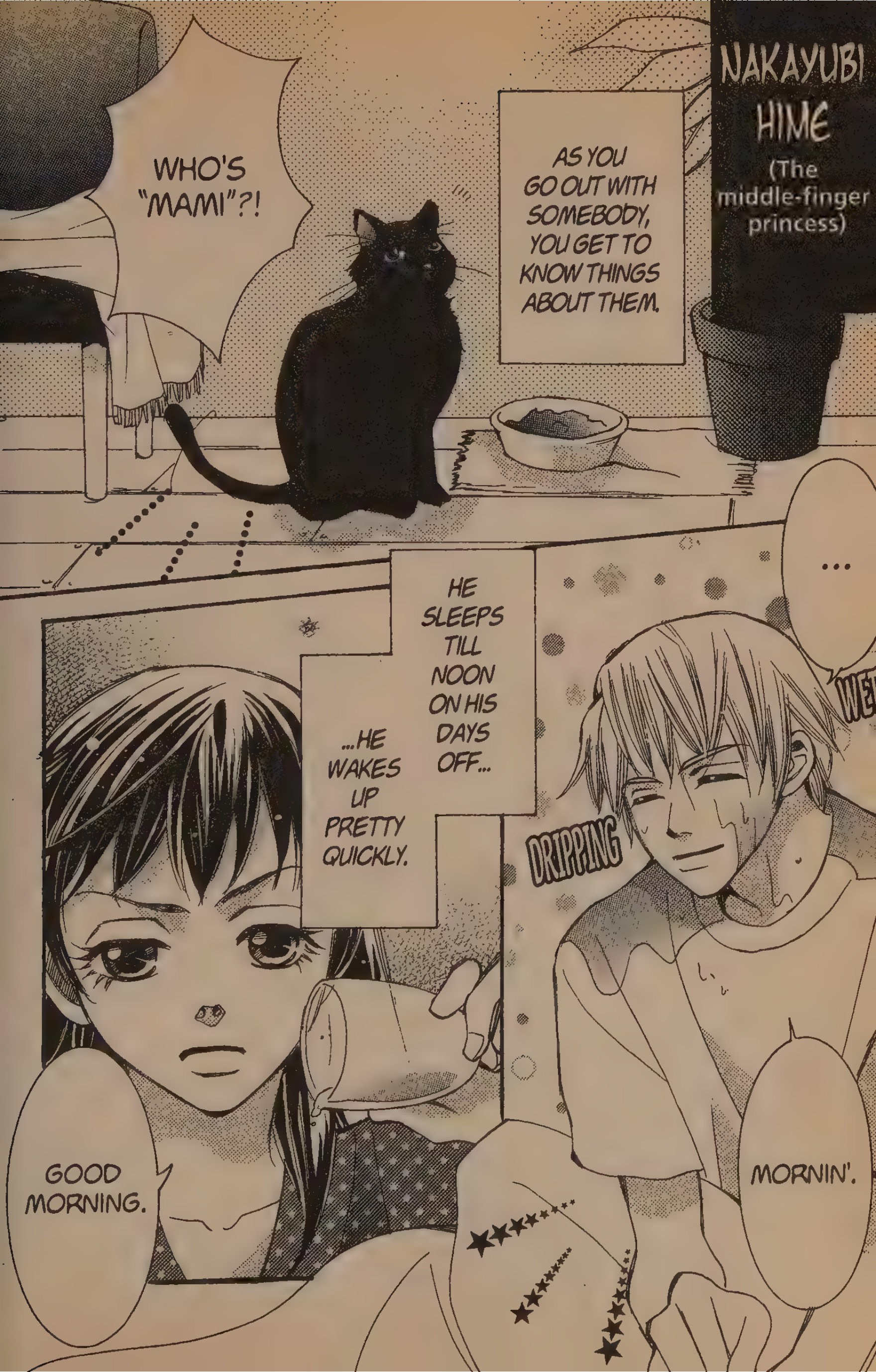

NOW ...I...
...MUST BE LOOKING LIKE A GROWN-UP.
BECAUSE EVEN THE COFFEE I HATE...
EMP
A CHILD...
...ISN'T BITTER AT ALL.
...SHOULDN'T BE AT AN AMUSEMENT PARK ALL ALONE.

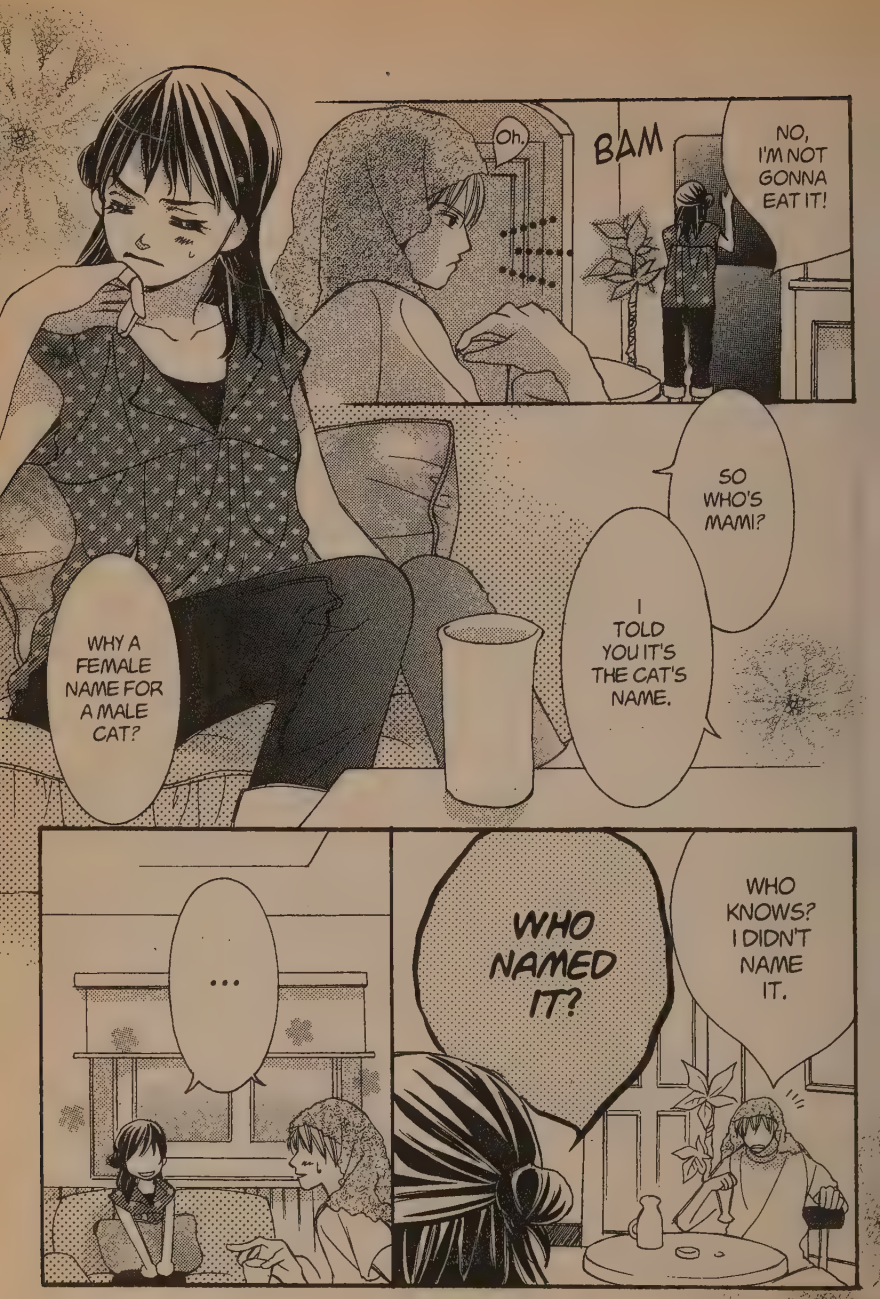


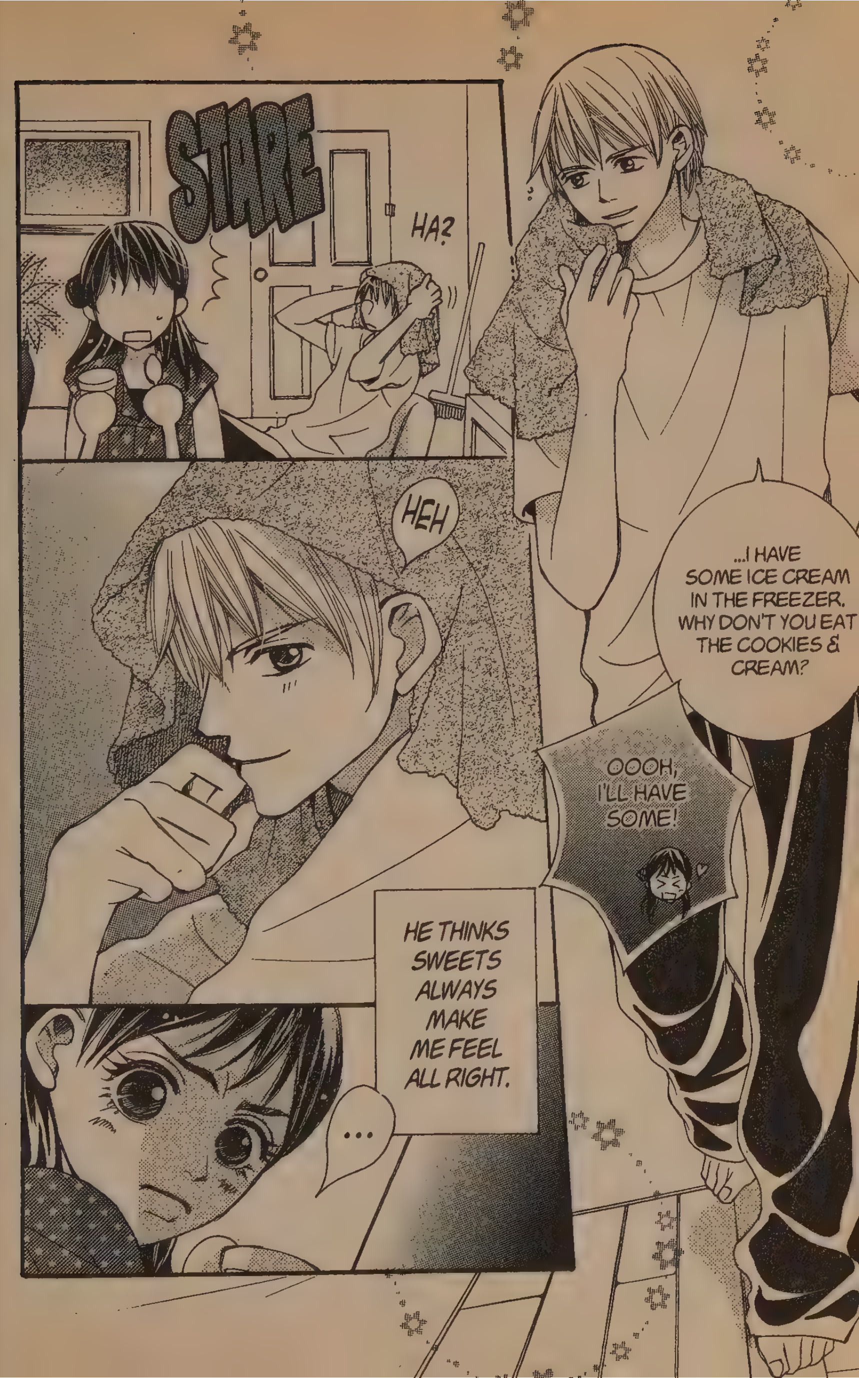

THE STORY OF THE PINKY-RING PRINCESS WHO CAN'T BE A GROWN-UP...
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO? YOU'RE ALREADY LATE FOR SCHOOL.
OOOPS ...
OKAY, LET'S START WITH ...
...THE DESSERT BUFFET!
...HAS JUST BEGUN ...

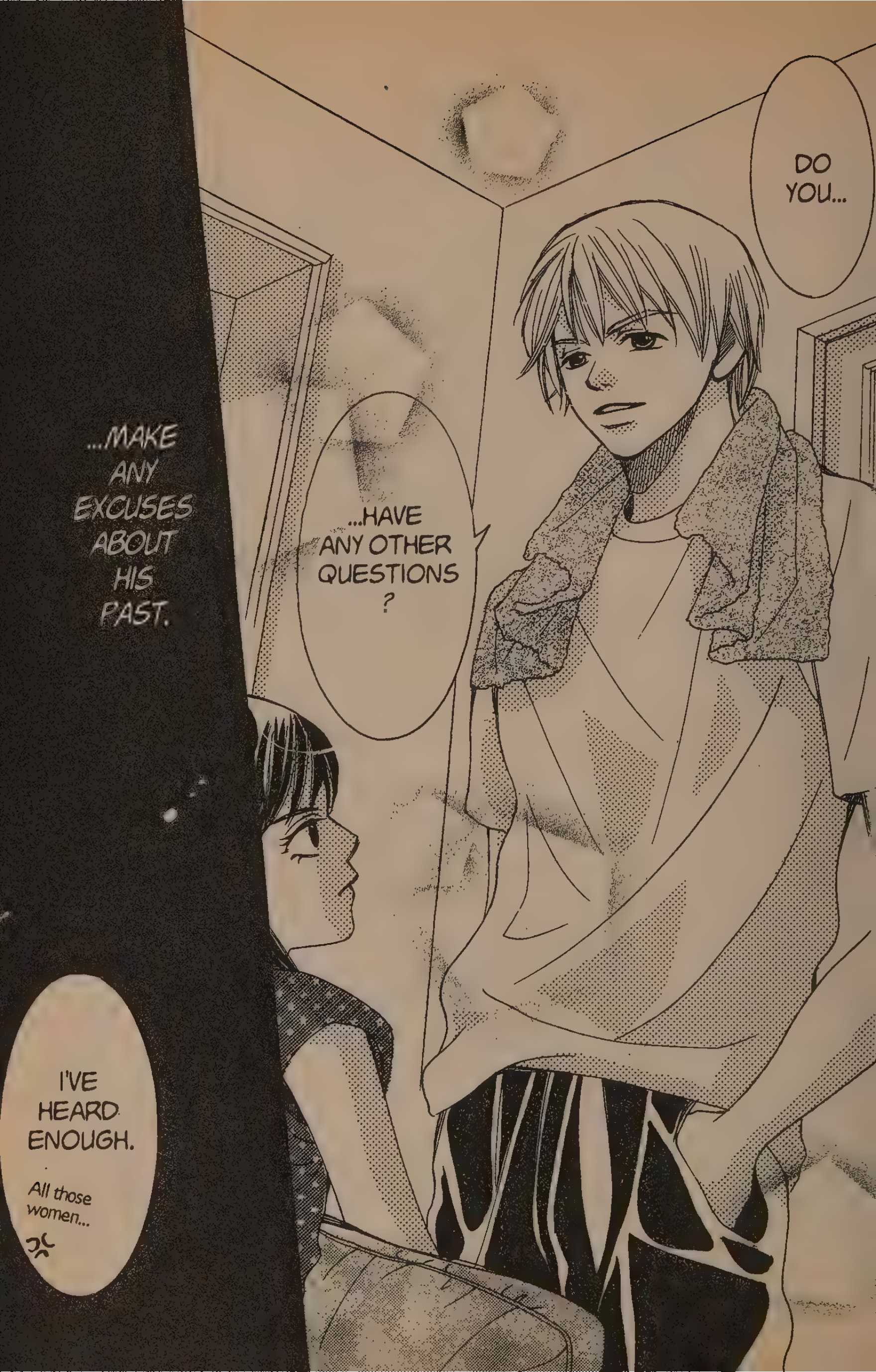

YOU USED THE SPARE KEY.
I'M GLAD.
I'M GLAD THAT MR. KASHIWAGI SAYS HE'S GLAD.
SO WHO'S THIS MAMI YOU WERE CALLING IN YOUR SLEEP?
That's... ...THIS CAT.
MEOW
THE CAT?!
You know him.
HELLO, I'M MAMI, THE BLACK CAT.
AND...
BAP
IT'S A **MALE** CAT!
Meow!
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S TRUE, BUT THIS CAT'S NAMED "MAMI."
HEY...

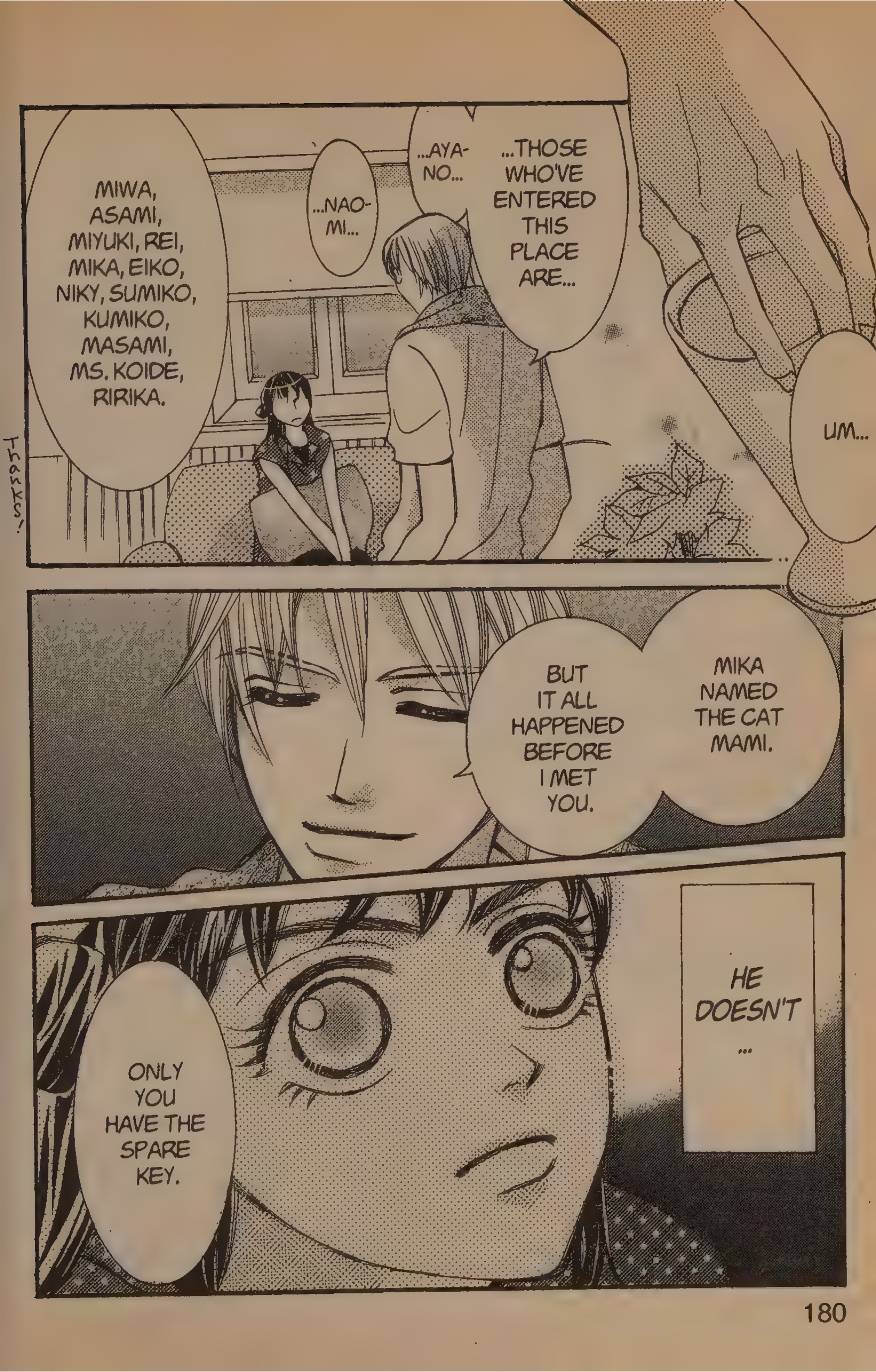
NAKAYUBI HIME
(The middle-finger princess)

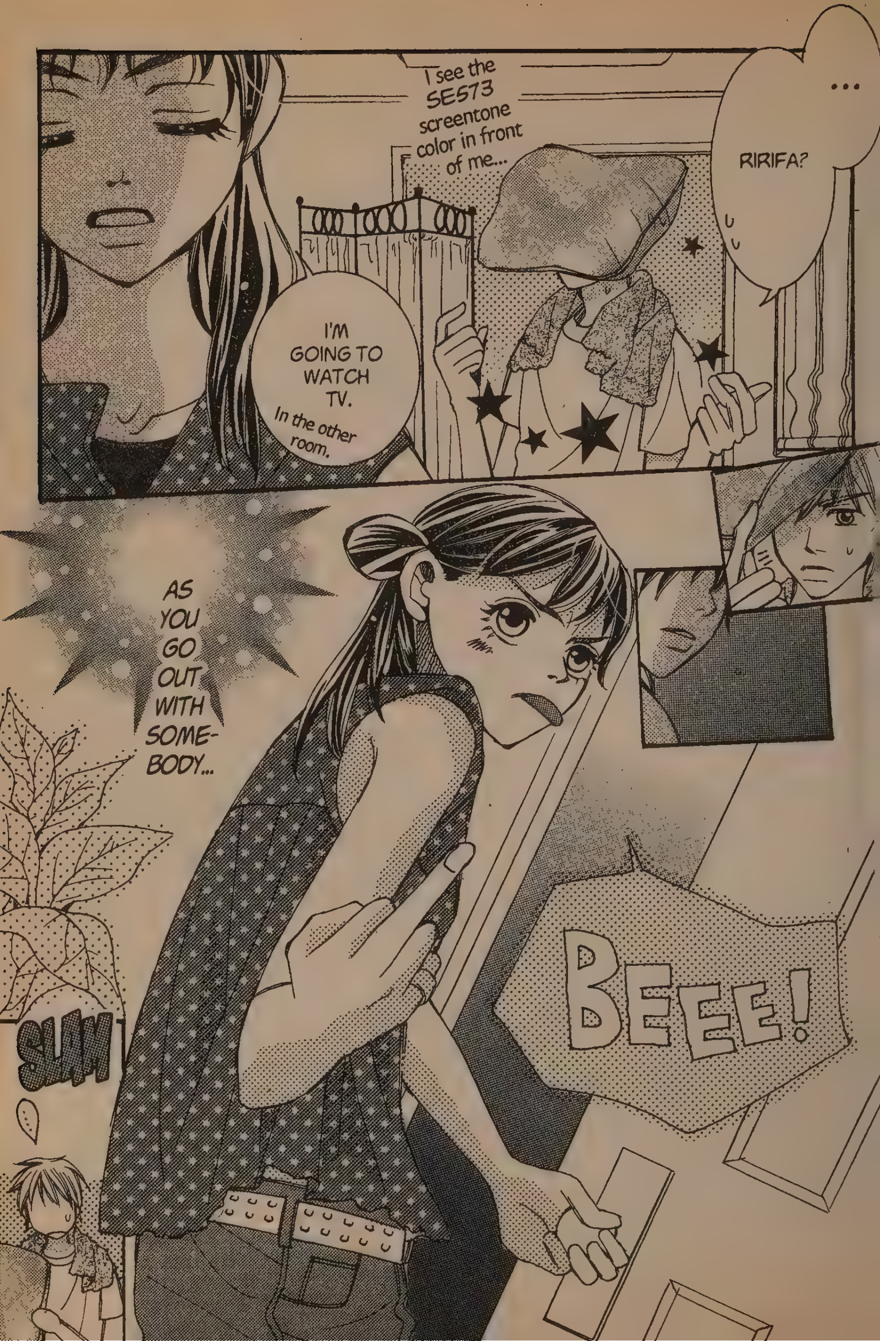

AS YOU GO OUT WITH SOMEBODY, YOU GET TO KNOW THINGS ABOUT THEM.
WHO'S "MAMI"?!
...
WE
HE SLEEPS TILL NOON ON HIS DAYS OFF...
...HE WAKES UP PRETTY QUICKLY.
DRIPPING
MORNIN'.
GOOD MORNING.

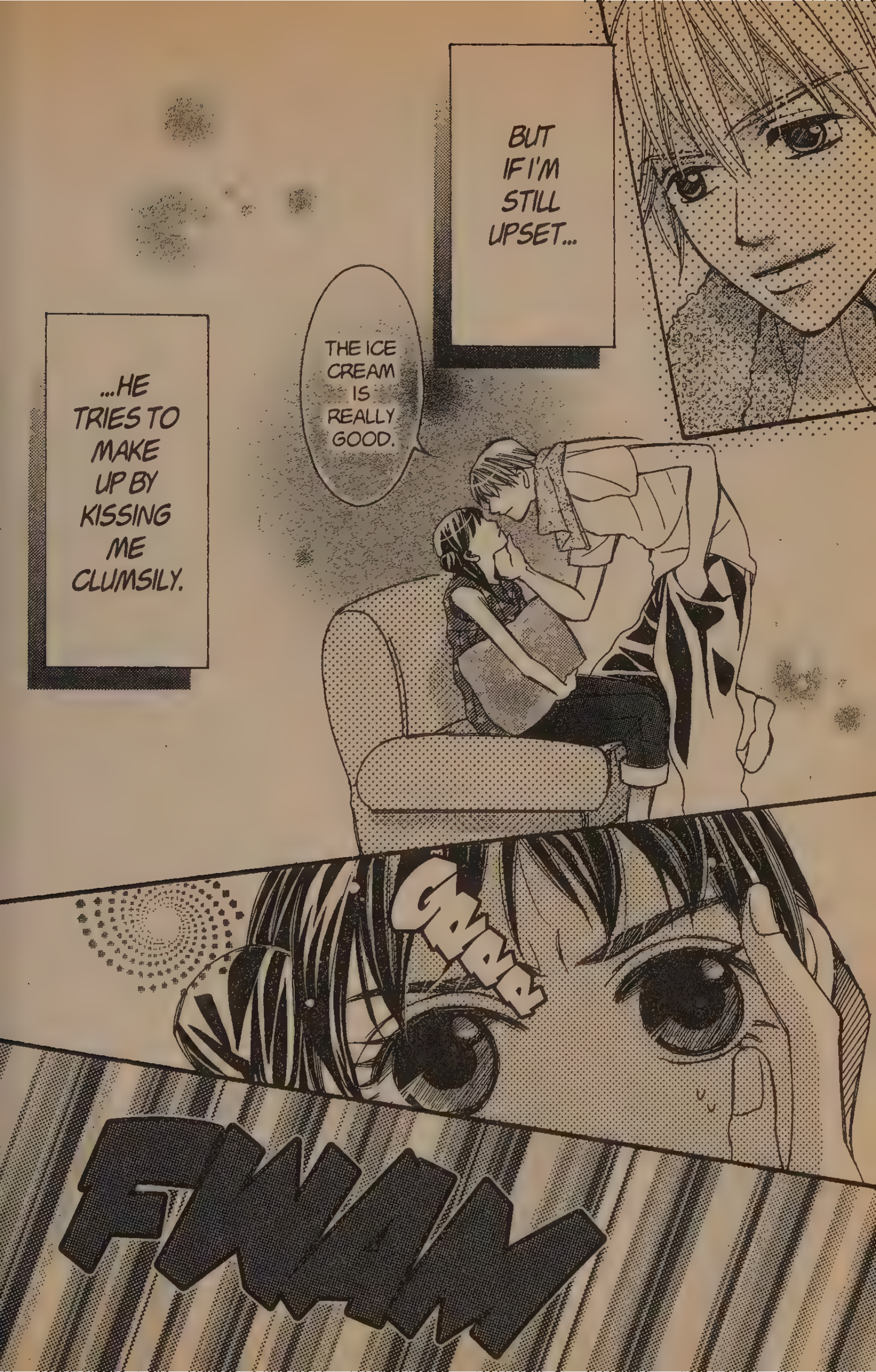

NO, I'M NOT GONNA EAT IT!
BAM
Oh.
SO WHO'S MAMI?
I TOLD YOU IT'S THE CAT'S NAME.
WHY A FEMALE NAME FOR A MALE CAT?
WHO KNOWS? I DIDN'T NAME IT.
WHO NAMED IT?
...

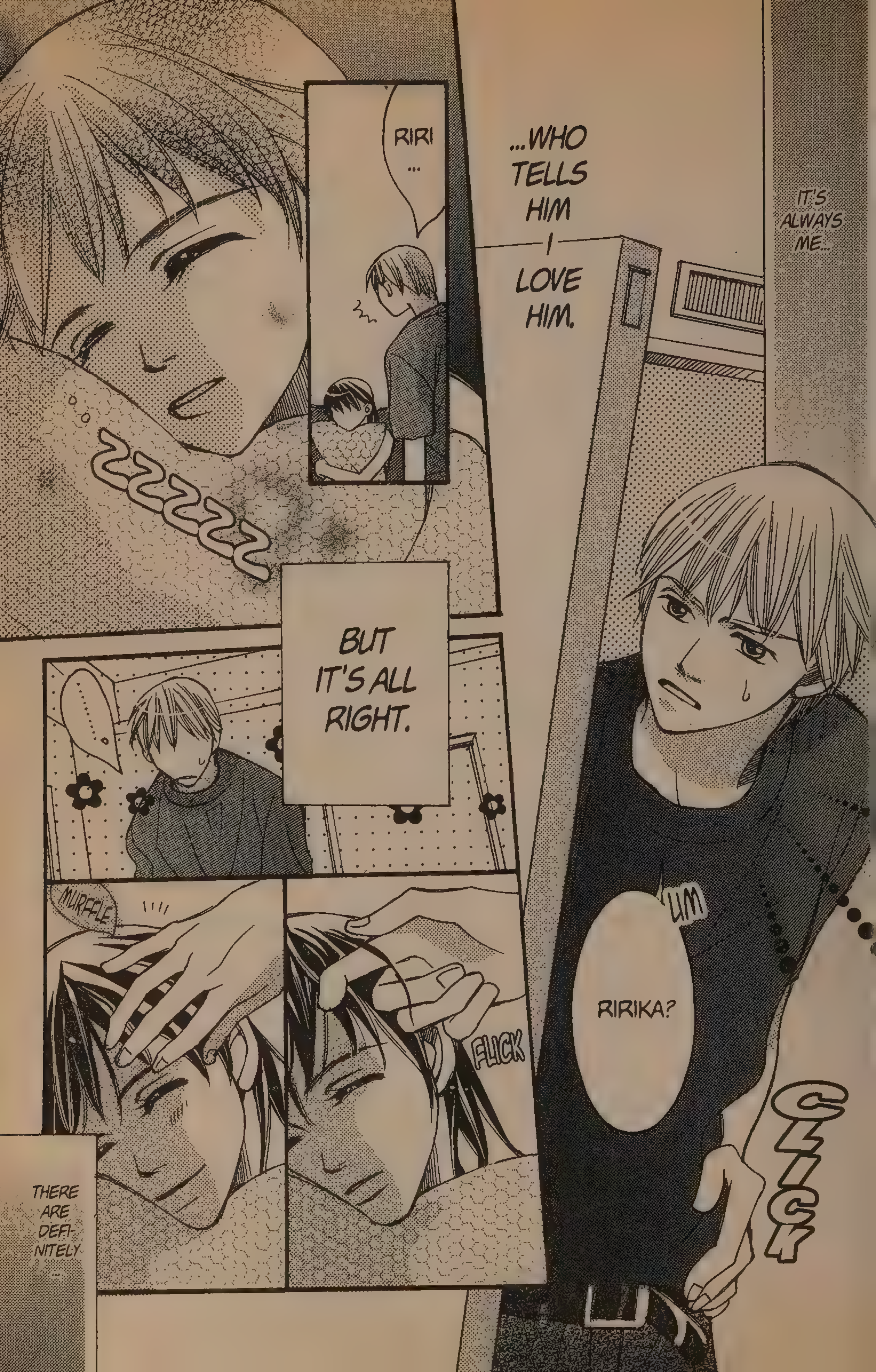

STARE
HA?
HEH
HE THINKS SWEETS ALWAYS MAKE ME FEEL ALL RIGHT.
...
...I HAVE SOME ICE CREAM IN THE FREEZER. WHY DON'T YOU EAT THE COOKIES & CREAM?
OOOH, I'LL HAVE SOME!

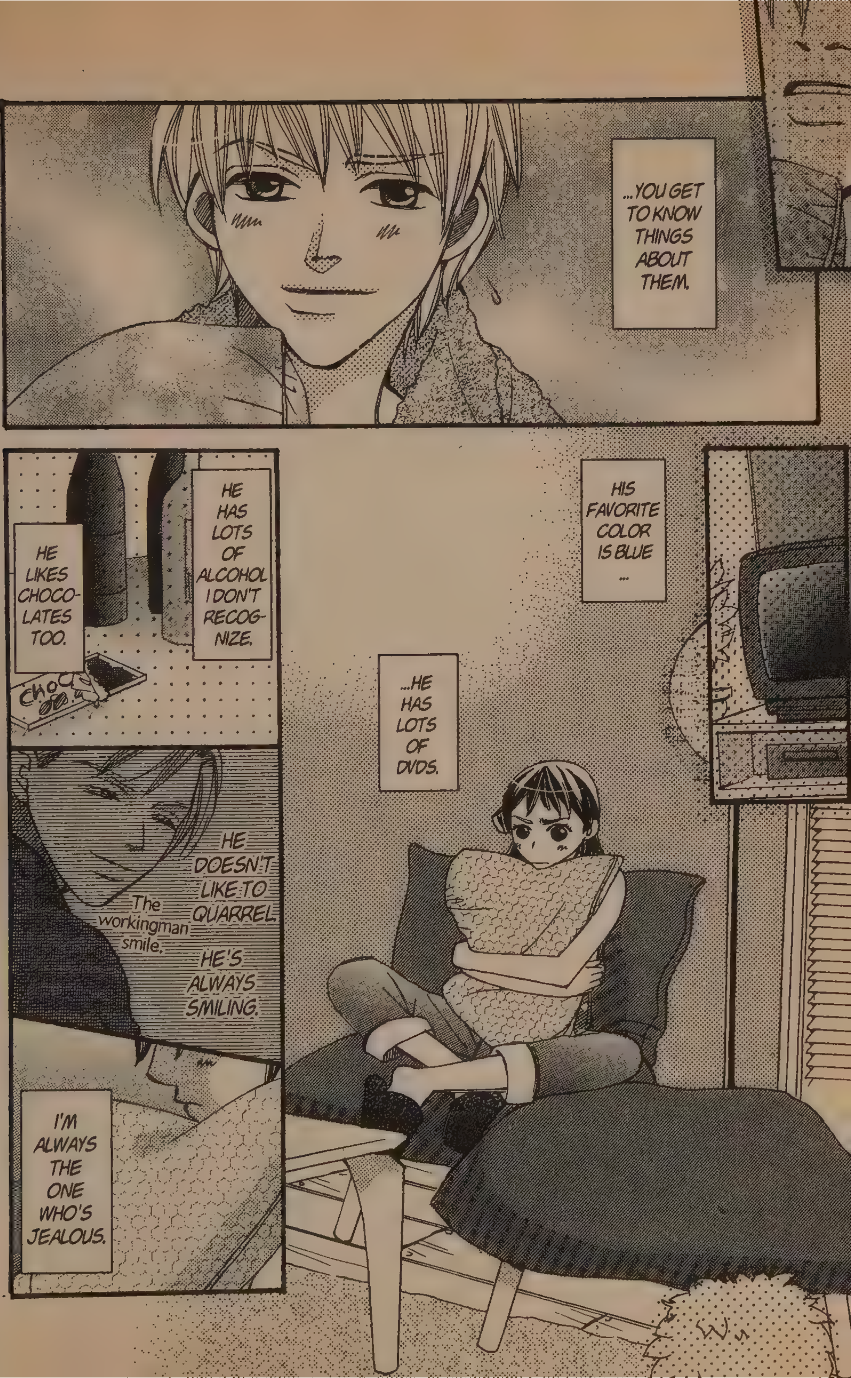

DO YOU...
...HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?
...MAKE ANY EXCUSES ABOUT HIS PAST.
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH.
All those women...

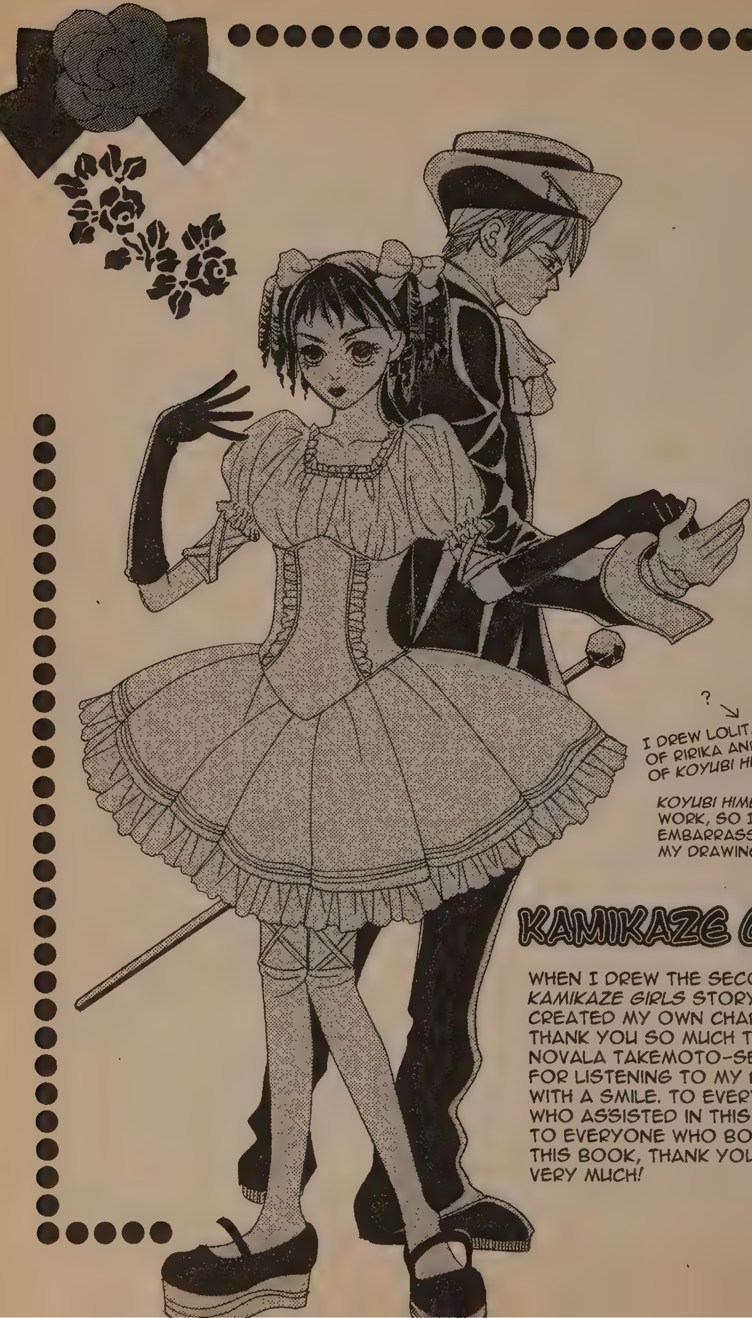

UM...
...THOSE WHO'VE ENTERED THIS PLACE ARE...
...AYANO...
...NAOMI...
MIWA, ASAMI, MIYUKI, REI, MIKA, EIKO, NIKY, SUMIKO, KUMIKO, MASAMI, MS. KOIDE, RIRIKA.
Thanks!
MIKA NAMED THE CAT MAMI.
BUT IT ALL HAPPENED BEFORE I MET YOU.
HE DOESN'T ...
ONLY YOU HAVE THE SPARE KEY.


...
RIRIFA?
I see the SE573 screentone color in front of me...
I'M GOING TO WATCH TV. In the other room.
AS YOU GO OUT WITH SOMEBODY...
BEEE!
SLAM


BUT IF I'M STILL UPSET...
...HE TRIES TO MAKE UP BY KISSING ME CLUMSILY.
THE ICE CREAM IS REALLY GOOD.
FWAAN


IT'S ALWAYS ME...
...WHO TELLS HIM I LOVE HIM.
RIRI...
ZZZZZ
UM
RIRIKA?
CLICK
BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT.
...
FLICK
MUFFLE
THERE ARE DEFINITELY...


...YOU GET TO KNOW THINGS ABOUT THEM.
HIS FAVORITE COLOR IS BLUE ...
...HE HAS LOTS OF DVDS.
HE HAS LOTS OF ALCOHOL I DON'T RECOGNIZE.
HE LIKES CHOCOLATES TOO.
Choco
HE DOESN'T LIKE TO QUARREL.
The workingman smile.
HE'S ALWAYS SMILING.
I'M ALWAYS THE ONE WHO'S JEALOUS.

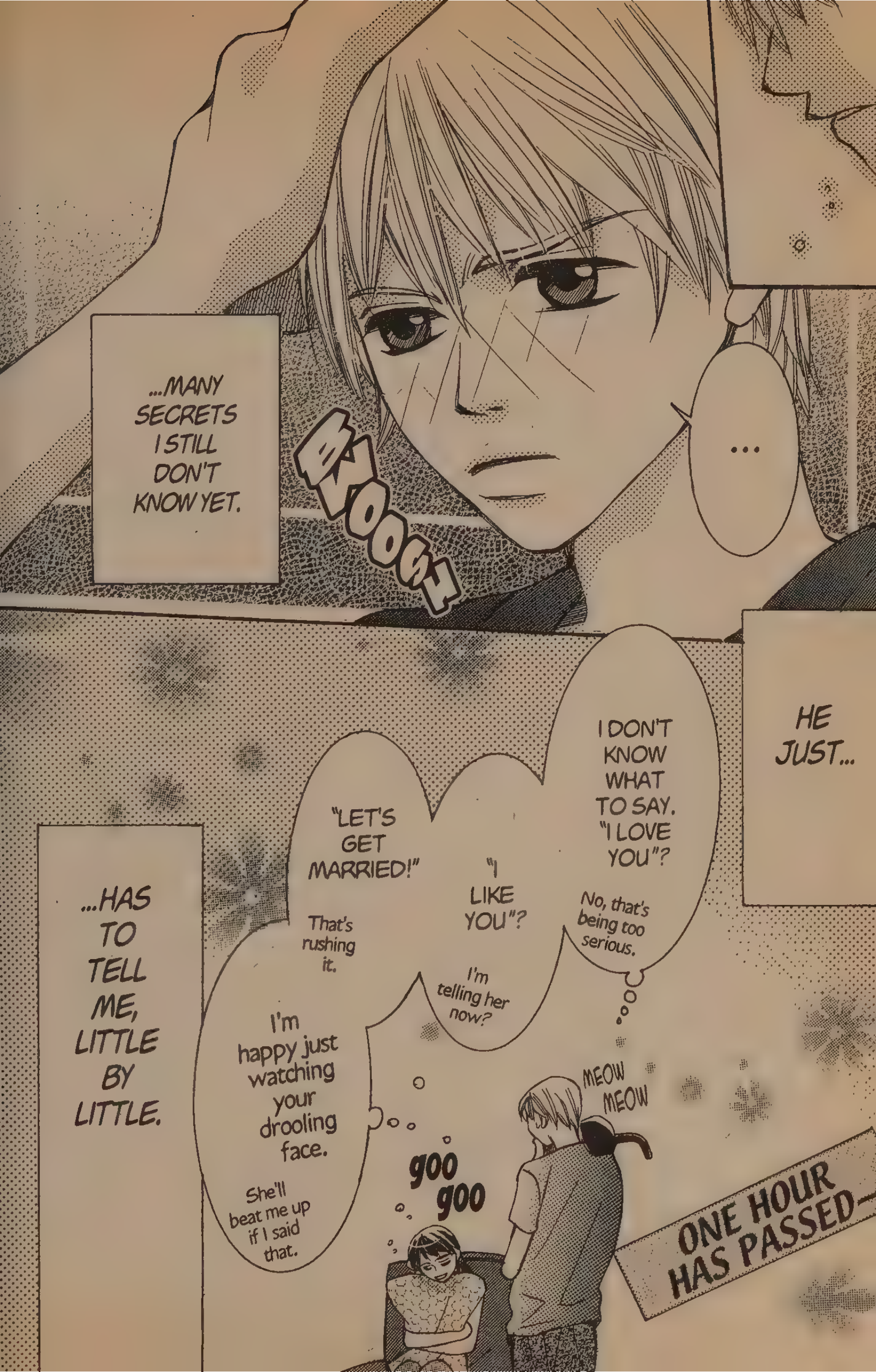


I DREW LOLITA VERSIONS OF RIRIKA AND KASHIWAGI OF *KOYUBI HIME.*

KOYUBI HIME IS AN OLD WORK, SO I'M A BIT EMBARRASSED ABOUT MY DRAWING.

KAMIKAZE GIRLS

WHEN I DREW THE SECOND *KAMIKAZE GIRLS* STORY, I CREATED MY OWN CHARACTERS. THANK YOU SO MUCH TO NOVALA TAKEMOTO-SENSEI FOR LISTENING TO MY REQUESTS WITH A SMILE. TO EVERYONE WHO ASSISTED IN THIS WORK, TO EVERYONE WHO BOUGHT THIS BOOK, THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!


...
...MANY SECRETS I STILL DON'T KNOW YET.
WHOOSH
HE JUST...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. "I LOVE YOU"?
No, that's being too serious.
"I LIKE YOU"?
I'm telling her now?
"LET'S GET MARRIED!"
That's rushing it.
I'm happy just watching your drooling face.
She'll beat me up if I said that.
MEOW MEOW
goo goo
ONE HOUR HAS PASSED—
...HAS TO TELL ME, LITTLE BY LITTLE.

Author Bio

Yukio Kanesada:

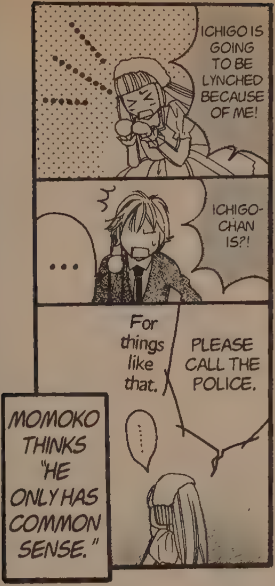
Born June 11, Gemini. [illegible]
[illegible]
Nagasa [illegible]
[illegible]
jump rope. I love history."
Debuted with *My Fair Girl*
(*Deluxe Bessatsu Shojo Comic*,
2001, August 5 issue).
[illegible]
and *Deluxe Betsucomi*.

Novala Takemoto:

Born January 26, in Uji City,
Kyoto. Aquariu [illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]

•ISOBE-SAN **GOGO**•


ICHIGO IS GOING TO BE LYNCHED BECAUSE OF ME!
ICHIGO-CHAN IS?!
...
PLEASE CALL THE POLICE.
For things like that.
...
MOMOKO THINKS "HE ONLY HAS COMMON SENSE."

Thank you for reading the *Kamikaze Girls,* Volume 1 manga. Please turn to the back and enjoy a special excerpt of the *Kamikaze Girls* novel, written by Novala Takemoto.

Beat

KAMIKAZE GIRLS

TAKEMOTO

Rina Mapa

ations/Rika Ino

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
KAMIKAZE GIRLS is rated T+ for Older Teen and is recommended for ages 16 and up. This volume contains suggestive themes, alcohol and tobacco use, and harsh language.

something sporting so many decorations both in front and back actually run? Just the accessories alone look pretty heavy—is what I thought as I gazed upon the chopper from a distance, giving it minus a thousand style points for the garish bad taste of its color scheme and utterly nonexistent sense of design. I mean to say, an ordinary motorcycle would probably be fine with all those embellishments so long as it had enough horsepower, but the bike in front of my eyes was, in spite of all the gnarly remodeling, a scooter. No matter how you looked at it, it was a plain old 50cc scooter.

This freakish scooter stopped blasting its horn when it realized I was there. And then, the person who had been doing the blasting, namely the person who had been riding the bike, got off of it and started walking toward me. The person had straight bleached-blond hair down to her shoulders, wore blue eye shadow and bright red lipstick, and had on a navy-blue school uniform comprised of a short jacket and a very long skirt with a prodigious number of pleats, which dragged on the ground. On her feet were—well, it would sound good to call them "mules," but actually they were cheap purple slip-on sandals of the type moms wear when going out to the neighborhood supermarket, and their sparkles glinted in the sun. *Wow, a* sukeban, *and a super old-school one too... Who knew bad girls wearing outfits like this still existed? Hand it to Ibaraki—this place is deep. If a curator for a natural history museum saw her, she'd immediately be captured and exhibited next to a stegosaur skeleton in the Fossils section.* As I was thinking this and watching her approach with some trepidation because, let's face it, people like that are kinda scary, the *sukeban* yelled out to me in a loud voice.

"Hey girlie, my name's Shirayuri. Would Miz Momoko be around at home?"

If that was an attempt at polite language, it was a shambles. But anyway, being the "girlie" addressed, I said yes. Oh dear, this was that Ichiko Shirayuri who really wanted Versace no matter what! From the clumsy style of her letter I had assumed she would be about thirteen years old, but there was no question now that she was a bona-fide high-schooler, about the same age as I. It would seem the awkwardness of her letter derived not from childishness but from simple ignorance, or should I say, stupidity. As I fidgeted in the garden, thinking what a pain it was to get involved with someone of this sort, the *sukeban* spoke again.

"So could you conduct me over to Miz Momoko if you will?"

To this, I answered nervously, "Um, I'm Momoko, actually."

You should have seen her face when she heard that. She twisted her mouth and widened her eyes, and her expression could have been taken as wanting to pick a fight, or being really sad and about to burst into tears, either way. TO BE CONTINUED...

The *Kamikaze Girls* full-length novel will be available soon from VIZ Media at bookstores near you!

of which was that she lived in Shimotsuma too, so would it be all right if she came by sometime to see the merchandise for herself? Well, if she was just a middle schooler, I didn't see any problem with inviting her to the house. I called the cell phone number given in her letter and arranged to have her come over after lunch that Saturday.

School ended at noon on Saturday, and I went straight home because that girl was coming over. Even though she was younger than me, it would be our first meeting and moreover, she was going to be buying clothes from me. Thinking it would be rude to greet her without being dressed at least somewhat properly, I decided to wear my white rose-patterned lace blouse with a black velvet knee-length skirt that's decorated in front with ladder lace and all kinds of other white lace, while the back is like curtains that are closed at the top and draped back at the sides, and where the velvet would ordinarily fall—namely the middle of the hips—layers of tulle peek out like bustles. On my head I perched a large white ribbon made to be worn like a headdress, and then I went to the room where all the bogus Versace was stored to arrange everything, sorting it into piles by type while I waited.

We had agreed to meet at one thirty, but she didn't appear. Maybe she was lost? Perhaps my directions had been inadequate. I'd told her to go just a little bit east on Route 131 where it intersects Route 249, and take the first left, which is a narrow road—it was an ordinary farmhouse with rice paddies in front, and she'd see it right after she turned. Maybe that wasn't detailed enough? But there was nothing around the house, so how else could I explain how to get here? As I sat there waiting, I suddenly heard the noisy cacophony of an engine, probably from the motorcycle of a passing Yanki. The loud vrooming sound gradually got louder, and then it stopped. Just when I thought it was finally quiet again, the earsplitting sound of those horns that Yanki like to put on their bikes and cars, arranged to play the *Godfather* theme, rang out: *parara rarарara rarararaad*!! *parara rararara rarararaaad*!!!! It was blasted out repeatedly, over and over. The source of the sound seemed to be right in front of our house, or at least very close to it, so I ventured out into the yard. The most outrageous motorcycle was parked out front.

In front of the handlebars towered an indescribably strange sunshade-type thing, fixed willy-nilly without any thought of balance, and painted with the Rising Sun. The seat had a backrest, which stretched so high skyward that if Giant Baba stood behind it, his head probably wouldn't show over the top. The seat itself was leopard-print. And the sunshade and backrest were not the only elongated features: behind the backrest were attached what would be called "tail fins" on a car, I believe, like super-long fake nails only a thousand times larger, and these too spread upward, reaching about as high as the seat and painted a camouflage pattern. The muffler was twisted, turned out, and extended, and again, pointed up. This muffler, while oddly shaped, was an ordinary metallic silver color, but the rest of the body was painted shocking pink all over, and overlaid with glitter. This was obviously a hot rod belonging to a Yanki, or more specifically, a Zokki—a member of a Bosozoku biker gang. I had seen bikes of this sort in Amagasaki and here in Ibaraki, but this was my first experience of seeing one this crazily souped-up from right up close. *Could*

FREE PREVIEW

Kamikaze Girls

Novala Takemoto

Translated by
Akemi Wegmüller

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First published by Shogakukan Inc. in Japan as "Shimotsuma Monogatari."

Kamikaze Girls *depicts the unusual friendship between a bored girl stuck in rural Japan who fantasizes about 18th century France and a spunky biker girl. Please enjoy this excerpt from the novel that inspired the manga and popular movie, both available from VIZ Media.*

In the end, I decided to contact only the girl from Ibaraki, who happened to live in Shimotsuma too and was named Ichiko Shirayuri. "Miz Ryugasaki. Pleeze let me buy your Versace stuff. I don't have much money so I can't pay you a whole lot, but I really want some Versace no matter what, so I beg you wherefore pleeze." The writing was printed out in block letters, *please* was spelled "pleeze," and the ending had the mysterious, nonsensical clause, "so I beg you wherefore pleeze." I suppose she meant "so I beg you therefore please," which *still* wouldn't make much sense. But how was I to answer a request couched in the interrogative form of "wherefore please"? Guessing that the writer was maybe in the first year of middle school, I sent her the following answer: "Dear Miss Shirayuri, Thank you for your letter. Regarding the merchandise, I have a considerable variety of items in large quantities. If you would kindly inform me what sort of things you desire, I will select suitable items and send you another letter detailing their color, design, shape, and other particulars. As for the price, I am open to negotiation. However, as I stated in my ad, all of the Versace items I have are counterfeits, and I request your understanding of this point." Wondering if I had used too many big words and complicated sentence structures—did she even know what "particulars" and "negotiation" meant?— I sent off the letter anyway. I received an answer right away, the gist

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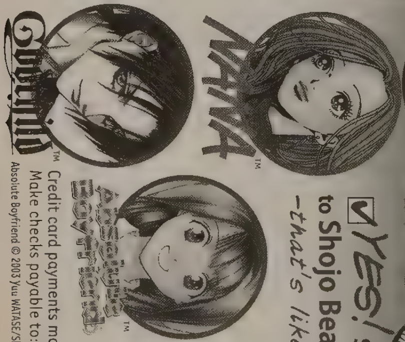

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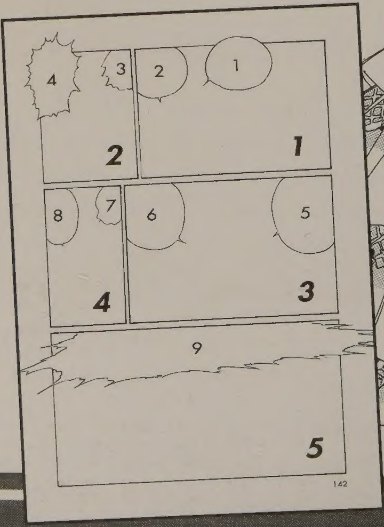

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